AN

ABSTRACT

of ſome late

CHARACTERS.

OR,

How the principall means appointed for our *Reformation* is become the maine fuell of our *Wickednes*.

Laid downe in

Sundry Characters of
- *L. Biſhops.*
- *Dumb Dogs.*
- *Non-Reſidenciaries.*
- *Men-Pleaſers.*
- *Unpreaching Miniſters, that Edify to damnation,*

By their
- *Scandalous Living.*
- *Falſe wreſting*
- *Miſ-applying*

} The Scripture.

So turning the Truth of GOD into a Lye, that they may
- *Diſcourage the Godly;*
- *Incourage the Wicked.*

In which the Blind world may ſee, to their ſhame, how Satan guls them with a multitude of Miſpriſions, and falſe ſurmiſes againſt the Godly; That ſo he may Barricado their hearts againſt all Good.

Neceſſary to be knowne in theſe times of Diſcovery.

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1 For L. B.

WOe unto you Scribes and Phariſees, Hypocrites! For ye ſhut up the Kingdome of heaven againſt men; For ye neither goe in your ſelves, neither ſuffer ye them, that are entring, to goe in. Ye have taken away the key of knowledge, &c. Luk. 11. 52. Mat. 23. 13. See more, v. 4, 5, 6, 7. 23, 24, 25. 27, 28. to 36. Joh. 11. 47, 48. 53. and 12. 10, 11. 3 Joh. 9. 10.

2 For D. D.

Her watchmen are blind. They are Shepherds that cannot underſtand. They are all ignorant. They are all Dumb-Dogs; they cannot barke. They are greedy dogs that can never have enough. Iſa 56 10, 11. See more Heb. 13, 17. Ezek. 3. 17, to 22. and 33. 6, 7. and 34. 10. Luk. 16. 2. 10. to 16. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3, 4.

3 For N. R.

Woe be to the Shepherds of Iſrael, that doe feed themſelves! ſhould not the Shepherds feed the flockes? ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the wooll: ye kill them, that are fed: but ye feed not the flocke. The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthened; neither have ye healed that which was ſicke; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; nor brought againe that which was driven away; nor ſought that which was loſt. But with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. They were ſcattered becauſe there was no Shepherd. They became meat, &c. Ezek. 34. 2. to 23. See more, Prov. 27. 23. Ezek. 3. 17. to 22. and 33. 6, 7. and 34. 10. Mat. 13. 25. Luk. 16. 2. 10. to 16. Joh. 10. 1. 3, 4, 5. 10, 12, 13. Act. 20. 28. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3, 4.

4 For M. P.

Prophecy no more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappell, and it is the Kings Court, &c. Amos 7. 13. *We preach not our ſelves: but CHRIST JESUS the LORD, &c.* 2 Cor. 4. 5. *My ſpeech and my preaching was not with the inticing words of mans wiſdome: but in demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power. That your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdome of men, but in the power of GOD,* 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. See more 2 Cor. 2. 17. and 4. 2. and 10. 4, 5. Joh. 5. 43. Phil. 1. 15, 16. 1 *King.* 22. 13.

5 For S. M.

Thou, which teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelfe? Thou, that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteale, doſt thou ſteale? Thou, that ſaiſt a man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery? &c. Rom. 2. 21, to 25. *From the Prophets of Jeruſalem is prophaneneſſe gone forth into all the Land.* Jerem. 23. 15. Looke Levit. 10. 3. Pſal. 50. 16, 17.

6 For U. M.

They juſtify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteouſneſſe of the righteous from them Iſai. 5. 23. *Te ſlay the ſoules, that ſhould not dye; and ſave the ſoules alive that, ſhould not live; by your lying to my people, that heare your lies. With your lies, you have made the hearts of the righteous ſad, whom I have not made ſad; and ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked; that hee ſhould not returne from his wicked way; by promiſing him life.* Ezek. 13. 19. 22. *The leaders of my people cauſe them to erre; and they that are led by them are deſtroyed.* Iſai. 9. 16. Looke more 1 King. 22. 23. Jer. 5. 31. and 8. 10. 11. and 9. 3. and 14. 14. and 23. 2, 3. 9. 10, 11 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22. 26, 27, 28, 29. 32, 36. Act. 20. 29, 30.

7 For the People.

Beleeve not every Spirit: but try the Spirits, whether they are of GOD. Becauſe many falſe Prophets are gone out into the world, 1 Joh 4. 1. *Beware leſt any man ſpoyle you through Philoſophy and vaine deceit; after the Tradition of men; after the Rudiments of the world; and not after CHRIST,* Coloſ. 2, 8. See more Joh. 5. 43. and 7. 17. Mat. 24. 11. 24. Rom. 16. 17, 18. 1 Joh. 4. 5, 6.

Characters of L. Biſhops, Dum Dogs, Non-reſidenciaries, Men-pleaſers, Unpreaching Miniſters, &c.

IT is the *Abſtract* of *Religion*, To imitate him, whom we worſhip. Neither are we worthy to be called *Chriſtians*, except we imitate CHRIST, and ſquare our lives, according to the *Rule* of his *Word*. Whence *Linacre*, reading upon the *New Teſtament* the 5,6 and 7. Chapters of Saint *Matthews* Goſpel; and comparing thoſe rules with *Chriſtians* lives, hee threw downe the Booke, and burſt forth into this Proteſtation. *Either this is not GODS Goſpel: Or we are not Chriſtians.* And certainly, if the Tith of us be Chriſtians, who call our ſelves ſo; there are abundance of Chriſtians in *Hell*. For what eyes can but run over, to ſee, for the moſt part, what lives men lead?

Now what ſhould be the reaſon of this? For it may move wonder to aſtoniſhment, ſince we cannot be ignorant of what GOD requires in his Word: For every houſe hath a *Bible*, which plainely ſhewes, that we need no other ground of our laſt and heavyeſt doome, then, *Ye have not given: ye have not viſited, &c. Mat.* 25. 41. to 46. And CHRIST hath continued his Goſpel among us now *above foureſcore yeares*, with ſuch ſupply of *Able Miniſters*, that no Nation under heaven may compare with us.

Having often and ſeriouſly thought of it, I find, that the *onely cauſe*, why ſo few are *Reformed*, is *The many advantages*, which Satans inſtruments have, in tempting to leudneſſe, above GODS ſervants, in perſwading to holineſſe. Some whereof are theſe, which I can but name, being injoyned to contract a large Volume, within the compaſſe of a ſheet or two of Paper. Oh! that we could minde them ſo much as they concerne us!

Firſt, Satans inſtruments are *farre more in number*. For, whereas *few* have the courage to exhort others unto holineſſe, Satan, (who is ſtiled in Scripture, *The God of this world*; *The Prince that ruleth in the aire*; and *that Spirit which worketh in all the children of diſobedience*, *Epheſ.* 2.2.) hath his tempters in every corner. As Where ſhall a man come, and not find ſeducers, namely *Drunkards*, or *Swearers*, or *Adulterers*, or *Idolaters*, or *Sabbath breakers*, or *ſcoffers* at Religion, or *perſecuters* of the godly, and the like? who ſeduce both by voyce, and by example, and are ſet on worke by Satan, as Apprentiſes by their Maſters; yea, he *filleth their hearts*, Job. 13.2. *ſtretcheth forth their hands*, Revel. 2.10. and *opens their mouthes*, Mat. 16.23. ſpeaking in, and by them, as once he did by the Serpent, *Gen.* 3.1.4.

2. As Satan hath many tempters to ſet upon us: ſo he hath *diverſe and ſundry wayes* (through mens helpe) to beguile us: many ſtrings to his bow, that, if ſome breake, the reſt may hold. Yea, like a cunning *Engineer*, he can invent new *Inſtruments*, according to the preſent occaſion; and he inventeth all he can, and puts in practiſe all that he inventeth.

3. Satans ſervants are more bold, ſubtle and induſtrious in tempting to lewdneſſe, than GODS people are, in perſwading to holineſſe.

4. If they cannot win men to hell by *faire meanes*, they will uſe *foule*: If they cannot intice, they will ſeeke to inforce men to ſin with them.

5. An evill ſuggeſtion is *more ready at hand*, than a good.

6. We are more *prone* by nature, to follow evill counſell than good.

7. The world (like *Jael*) begins with *milke*, and ends with an *hammer*, whereas CHRIST keepes backe the good *wine untill afterwards*, and makes his ſervants *breake their faſt with the rod. Luk* 9.23.

8. The devill and his inſtruments can ſo delude the *judgements* of naturall men, that they ſhall neither *ſee* any thing deſirable in a *Religious life*, nor give *credit* to any thing, that the godly affirme. Yea, they ſhall eſteeme Religion no better than *fooliſhneſſe*, 1 *Cor.* 1.18.

9. They can ſo foreſtall them with prejudice againſt GODS people and goodneſſe, by their ſlanders and aſperſions, that they ſhall reſolve never to be religious, ſo long as they live.

10. Whereas they that turne to GOD, barre themſelves of all ſinfull delights and pleaſures, yea are reſtrained in their very thoughts: Their Diſciples may ſatisfie themſelves and their luſts to the full, and be applauded for it.

11. Satans ſervants have farre more peace with him than the godly: for he fights not with his owne ſubjects or ſouldiers.

12. They are at peace with the world: for the world *loves her owne*, but hates, flouts, and perſecutes all that are choſen out of it, *Joh.* 15.19.

13. They have farre more peace with their owne hearts than the godly: for their Conſciences, being brawned with the cuſtome of ſin, are caſt into a dead ſleep by Satan; they never checke them, doe they what they will: nor are they ever troubled in mind, as many ſcrupleous *fooles* are.

14. Satans ſervants are better proficients under him, and thrive more in ſin, than GODS ſervants can doe in grace; becauſe,

Firſt, He ſo blindes their eyes, that the *light of the glorious Goſpel cannot ſhine unto them*, 2 *Cor.* 4.3,4. 2 *Theſſ.* 2.9,10.

Secondly, When he ſets upon any poore ſoule, he ſhews the baite, hides the hooke, letting nothing appeare to the eye, but pleaſure, profit, and ſeeming happineſſe.

Thirdly, Cuſtome bringeth ſin to be ſo familiar, that the horror of it is turned into delight.

15. Whereas CHRIST hath inſtituted as a remedy, to prevent the ſpreading of ſin, and a meanes of converſion from ſin, That all notorious offenders (when neither admonition, nor reprehenſion will ſerve to reclaime them) ſhould firſt be ſeparated from the company of *Beleevers*; and in caſe they ſtill remaine obſtinate, *ſhould be delivered unto Satan, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the LORD JESUS*, *Mat.* 18.15 to 19. 1 *Cor.* 5.5. 2 *Theſſ.* 3.14. Which was the practice of the primitive Church: Now by an equall bounty to the godly and wicked, there is an equall incouragement to godlineſſe and iniquity; which is a greater advantage to Satan, than any of the former.

Object. But you will ſay, CHRIST hath his Miniſters in every Pariſh, to preach for him: whereas Satan hath none.

Anſw. This is the miſtake that undoes us: For, did we, according to our Saviours rule, *judge righteous judgement*, and not after *the appearance onely*, *John* 7.24. We ſhould finde, that as once in *Iſrael*, 1 *King.* 18.22. & 22.6,7. 22, 23, 24. So now in *England*, Satan hath a more numerous *Clergie* than CHRIST himſelfe: and that they edifie more to *damnation*, than CHRISTS faithfull Miniſters can doe to *ſalvation*. Neither is Satan ſo much beholding to any men alive, as to them. For, although all wicked men are *ſeed of the ſame old Serpent*, *Gen.* 3.15. And *children of the Devill*, *Joh.* 8.44.

And

And so resemble and imitate him in tempting to sin, and drawing to perdition: yet none have so helpt to fill hell, and to people that infernall Kingdome, like false prophers in seducing, either by their vitious lives, and serpentine preaching; or in betraying by their not Preaching, or fruitlesse and unprofitable Preaching. And therefore, when Satan would appeare disguised, he transformes himselfe into one of these *Angels of light*, 2 *Cor.* 11.13,14. And alwayes chooseth them to be his instruments to tempt, rather than other men, because they in regard of their parts and eminency, are more fit for it than any other; as of all the creatures, which GOD made, Satan chose the *Serpent* to be his instrument to tempt *Eve*, because *It was more subtle than any beast of the field*, *Gen.* 3.1. But first take a view of them, and then say, whether Satan be so much beholding to any men alive, as to his *Chaplaines*, whether he hath any servants, that doe him such faithfull service; any Factors that make him such a returne of soules; any Generals that subdue so many souldiers to him; any Advocates, that plead so hard for him, as his Ministers of the Clergy; which may be marshalled into *Two Bands*, *viz.*

1. *Non-preaching* } *Ministers.*
2. *Un-preaching* }

Of which severally: But with a difference. For, as touching the first sort; because they are lesse principall (in that *starving* the people seemes not altogether so bad, as *poysoning* them) I will onely deale with them, as our *Reverend Judges* doe with *seditious Attornies*; *call* them to the *Bench*; *Pitch* them over the *Barre*; Put out their names from the Roll, and let them goe.

Now *non-preaching Ministers* are either

1 *Dumb Dogs*.
2 *Non-Residenciaries*, *and Double-Beneficed men*, or
3 *Men-pleasers*.

As for *Lord Bishops*, I hold them fit rather to be ranked with unpreaching Ministers, though they are the principall of both kinds.

First, *Dumb Dogs* be such, as are *Tongue-tyed*, and (for the most part) *hand-tyed* also; and cannot Preach for insufficiency. Their place hath set them to charge: but they have neither *pouder* nor *shot*. Perhaps they can *snarle* against such as doe; and *brow-beat GODS* people: but that is all. Indeed they are skilfull in *Fleecing*, though unskilfull in *feeding* the *Flocke*; as it was said of *Geffery Bishop of Lincolne*; being; as the Prophet stiles them, *Greedy dogs*, *that can never have enough*, *Isay* 56. 10,11. Now these barren trees, that occupy the roome, where better trees might grow, are not onely liable to a fearefull curse, *Luk.* 13.7. But have made themselves guilty of the *blood* of the *LORDS* people, in taking upon them to be their *Captaines* and *Conducters*, and yet have no skill at all, in managing of Martiall affaires. But why should I speake to these? Commonly when men are *Dumb*, they are *deafe* too. And admit they be more then ordinarily sensible of their bellies: yet *the belly hath no eares*. And therefore I will leave them to their Judge, who hath already pronounced their doome, *Ezek.* 22.31. *Zach.* 11. 17. *Jer.* 23. 12. 15,19,20.34. Onely I will afford them the priviledge, to *lead* the *Troupe*, as *Judas* led the *Souldiers*.

Secondly, for *Non-Residenciaries* and *Double-beneficed-men*, (whose number is very great; some of them attending about the *Court*, some in Bishops houses; some lying in *London*, and some in the *Universities*) they can, and (lest they should lose their *livings*) doe Preach: But, withall they are so idle and negligent, that it is but about *once a Quarter*, or *once a Moneth*: And then, to *little*, or *no purpose*. For, as they neither aime at *GODS glory*, nor the *edification* and *conversion* of their hearers, but their owne credit, profit, and preferment: So their people are neither instructed in the *mysteries* of *salvation*, nor any whit reformed in their *Lives*.

Indeed, That may seeme to make them more excusable than the former. But in truth they are more *criminall*; as the *servant*, *which knowes*, and is *able to doe his Masters will*, if he doe it not, is *worthy of double stripes*. Neither are they lesse guilty of the peoples blood,

who are committed to their charge. For what difference betweene *Not-Saving*, and *Destroying*? Not to water a Plant, when it is dry, is to kill it: And the fire is as well put out by the *Subtraction* of fewell, as by *Powring Water* upon it. The *Advocate*, that is retained to plead, betraies the cause, by his *Voluntary Silence*.

But *Can* they, or *Can* they not *Preach ofter*? If they *Can*; They are *Traytors* to the people. The *Watchman*, that doth not ring the *Allarme-Bell*, at the approach of danger, betraies the City to the enemy. If they *Cannot*; They are *Traytors* to CHRIST. He that will take upon him to be a *Leader*, when he cannot instruct the people of GOD in the *Spirituall Warfare*, betraies the trust that was committed to him, and gives great advantage to Satan, and his ministers, who are farre more industrious in their generation, *Esay* 5. 18. *Matth.* 13. 25. *Rev.* 14. 11. Indeed it's most probable they *Can*, but *Will* not preach often, out of policy: For as *Demosthenes* had a greater fee for being *Silent* in a *Cause*; so many of them have gotten preferment, by their *Rarity*, or rather *Nullity* of preaching.

Object. But they have *Curates*, that preach for them; to whom they allow meanes.

Answ. They allow them meanes, either because they cannot helpe it; or to fulfill the Proverb, *Steale a Goose, and stick downe a Feather*.

As for their preaching by a *Substitute*; It is as good a *Discharge* of their *Charge*, as if one should *marry a wife*, under hope to obtaine *Issue* of her, by *another man*. Besides; The *Hireling cares not for the Sheep*, *Joh.* 10. 13. They are not *his owne*. And what minds he, whether they be *Fat*, or *Leane*? *A mercenary Advocate* lookes onely to his *Fee*; let his *Clients Cause stand or fall*, it is all one to him; so long as he hath his money. Wherefore these, that feede their flocks, by their *Deputies*, may justly feare, that GOD will serve them hereafter, as they serve him now. They shall be saved by their *Deputies*, but *damned* in their *owne persons*. And is it not just that they serving GOD altogether by *another*, should be *saved* altogether by *another*? But this point of *Non-Residency* being so common, and withall so gainfull, is over-hard to be *concocted*: Yea *Pallas*, with all the *Graces*, may call *Briareus* with his *hundred hands*, to bind this *Jupiter*, and all in vaine. For, should CHRIST in his owne person, admonish them as he did the *covetous Pharisees*, they *would laugh him to scorne*, *Luke* 16. 14.

3. The next in order are *Men-pleasers*, which are of fundry sorts.

1. Some whereof onely affect *curiosity* of matter: As it is the foolish ambition of *unblest understandings*, to be most prying into things that are secret, and to slight that which they are injoyned to teach; whose *Metaphysicall Speculations*, *Frothy Inferences*, *Curious*, *Idle*, *Absurd*, *Brain-sicke*, *Vaine*, *Unprofitable*, and *Ænigmatique Questions* and *Intricasies*, so swarme in their braines, and boyle out of their *unscummed wits*, that they are without measure or end. But by this meanes, in teaching their people *Mysteries*, before they know *Principles*, both *Pastor* and *People presuming to be wise above sobriety*, *become Fooles*, as the Apostle speakes, *Rom.* 1. 22.

2. Others are no lesse addicted to *singularity*. And these, as they can devise *new and unheard-of Principles*, *Doctrines* not once mentioned in the Scripture: So their braines are still travelling to bring them forth; knowing that a *new fashion* doth not more take with your *proud Gallants*, then a *new Opinion* doth with many ignorant hearers. But it is the *humility* of the *best judgements* to apply their studies to the *confirmation of received truths*, and the *meeknesse of blest understandings* to disaffect *singularities*.

3. A third sort, are your *Antinomian Preachers*, who are all for *Faith* and *assurance*, without once doubting: nothing for *Prayer*, *Repentance*, *and new Obedience*. These so preach CHRIST and the *Gospel*, that they make the *Law* to be of no use; and labour so much to set up *Justification*, that they preach downe, and quite overthrow *Sanctification*.

4. Another sort are all for *Order* and *Decency*: (though themselves live most *disorderly*) For the maintenance whereof, they bestow their whole *Talents* of *Time* and *Study*. Now these also are *wise above sobriety*: But another way: For, as the *Jewes* were not content

with

with such Rulers as GOD had appointed them, but they would have a *King* like the *Gentiles*: so these are not content with such Lawes as CHRIST hath appointed them, but they will have *Traditions* like the *Iewes*. Yea, they can devise better Orders, better Lawes, better titles, better callings, better discipline, &c. then CHRIST hath devised himselfe. But what saith our Saviour? *Every Plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up, Matth.* 15.13

Now, if you note it: These Ministers instead of pleading GODS cause, plead only the Bishops: and in lieu of feeding their flocks with the substantiall food of the Word, they onely preach for *Ceremonies and humane inventions*. And the reason is: They gape for preferment; and this is the way to it. Indeed as *Iudas* would have his *Covetousnesse* taken for *Charity, Iohn* 12. 5, 6. And the *Pharisees* their *Cruelty* thought *Piety, Matth.* 23. 14. So these Hypocrites pretend onely their great zeale of the Churches good.

Nor is this kind of preaching more generall and gainfull then it is popular. For the multitude much applaud them for it; which is all the use they make of such Sermons. Onely it edifies them in their superstitious formality, and stirres them up with great zeale, to raile against all, that are better informed; which is the onely marke, at which those *Sophisters* aime.

5. Others there are, that preach nothing to their people, (what ever their auditory be) but *Controversie*, that onely pleaseth themselves, and some itching eares. Therefore, if it please not others, they may *turne the buckle of their girdle*. For to preach against sin and ignorance, to discover Satans stratagems, and the like, were to thwart the bent of their peoples wils, and their owne studies. I blame not the preaching of it, but the preaching of it onely. But what is the effect of this their preaching? Their simple hearers so lust after fruitlesse knowledge (for so it is comparatively) that they seldome finde any roome for that which they should know; as *Repentance, Regeneration, Faith*, and the like. Yea, in busying their heads about the highest matters, their aspiring wits mount so high, that they fall againe, like *Babel*, and runne into *Doubts*, whiles they seeke for *Resolutions*, reeling from *Religion* to *Religion*; like a drunken man, from wall to wall, they go to and fro *seeking and seeking* which is the true Church; like them which sought after *Elias* his body, and found it not; or like those blind *Sodomites* which wearied themselves to find *Lots* doore, yet could not find it. As I know some, who have spent all their time in reading of *Controversie*, yet have at this houre their Religion to chuse.

6. Another sort of *Men-pleasers*, are such as preferring *Abana* and *Pharpar* before the River of *Iordan*, chuse rather to feed their people with the *Onions* and *Melons* of humane speculations, then with the spirituall *Manna* of GODS Word. Which is the cause their hearers have such leane and hunger starved soules. There be a world of *unhallowed Divines*, that being sent to sue for GOD, wooe for themselves. For all their aime and end is, *To set out their Learning and Reading, and to breed admiration of their wit and worth*. Whence their Sermons are so *richly compounded of all Arts, and Daplod so full of Authorities* from *Poets, Orators, and Philosophers*; and so *stuft* with *rich, magnificent, pompous, and painted words, well-couched phrases, Oratory Figures, and Patheticall Metaphors*: (For they runne all upon *Metaphors*; and by their good wils, speake not without a *Figure*.) Together with *Hebrew, Greeke, and Latin Sentences*; That no *Roome* can be afforded for *Scripture*. Yea, they *Scorne* the *Grave Eloquence*, the *Stately Plainnesse*, the *Rich Poverty*; that *Humble Majesty*, that shines in the *Simplicity* of the *Scripture*. The *Contemptible Coursnesse of Scripture-Phrase grates* their *Delicate Eares*, and *offends* their *queasie stomachs*. For they are not able to *Peise*, (and so not to *Praise*) how in *Fewnesse of words*, there is *Fulnesse of Matter*: That they are *Thick and Short, Pithy and Patheticall*; *Briefe*, and yet *Full*; *Concise*, and yet *Cleare*; *Carelesse*, and yet *Accurate*. Which men, if they cannot instruct GOD, how to deliver his mind better: yet they are not so *Well-pleased* with the SPIRITS way of *Expression*, as with their *Owne*; when delivering their *Words* by *Weight*, and *Drawing* their *Notions* into *Knots*, and *Borders*; placing them like *Chequer*, or *Fret-*

work

worke; driving their *Clauses* to so *Even a Cadency*, that they fall in a *Iust-measure and sound.*

And to give them their *Due*; Their *Discourses* are so *Curiously Couch'd, so Neatly Starch'd and set*: Their *Words so Ranked, and meetly Marshall'd*, as if they were *a Kinne* to *Him*, whose *Name* is, *Six-Hundred-Sixty-Six.*

And yet excell they never so much in wit, learning, order, elegancy and phrase: Admit they deliver their words in *Waxe*, with a *Soring-sublimity, of high Straines, and Choice Composures*; Though it move *Great Delectation of affection*; Suppose they transport their hearers with the wind of words, and flouds of eloquence: yet they are but *Frothy and Vaine Preachers*: yea they preach no more in reality, then *Harpocrates* the *Egyptian*, who was alwayes painted with his finger in his mouth: For as every sound is not *Musick*: so every Sermon is not *Preaching.* A maine end of *Preaching* is *Converting*, as the end of *Fishing* is *Catching.* But their Sermons tend to no such end. Well may these *Cobwebs* of wit and learning be curious and admirable for their fineneſſe of thread and worke: but they are of no substance or profit to the soule. As for their converting of a sinner, or building up of a Christian, they know not what it meanes. As let me appeale to their own Consciences, whether in all their lives they have so much as *Civilized*, or *Philosophized* one drunken, debauched, and vitious liver, by this their manner of preachtng. Or can any one of their Applauders say: Such a man hath made me an *Hater* of vice, and a *Lover* of vertue? No: for their Sermons doe not more please the eare, then they starve the soule; being like that *Golden Banket*, which *Caligula* set before his guests, which onely delighted the eye, but neither pleased the palat, nor satisfied the stomach. So that to speak rightly, They *Cosen* the world with *Copper* for *Gold*; with *Glasse* for *Pearle*; with *Seeming* for substance; and sell us breath, for the bread of life, to strengthen us; and froth in stead of *Cordiall* and *Celestiall* water to comfort us. *The Prophet that hath my word, let him speake my word faithfully. What is the Chaffe to the Wheat, saith the* LORD? *Jer.* 23. 28. Or if the hungry soule finds any thing in their Sermons to feed upon, it is but like a meale of *Crafish*, where is much picking, very little meare; or as a banket of *Kickshawes*, which neither makes good bloud, nor begets spirits; neither strengthens the sinewes, nor increaseth the marrow; but onely procures lust, makes the belly flatuous and swels the body.

I need not stand to amplifie it. You finde in your owne observation and experience a great differenee betweene these *Speculative Preachers*, and experimentall *Divines.* As heare the one, that speakes spirituall things in spirituall words, with spirituall devotion and zeale; and you will be ready to say with those Disciples going to *Emmaus*: *Did not our hearts burne within us, whiles he spake?* *Luke* 24. 32. Or with those, *Matth.* 7. 29. *He speakes with authority, and not as the Scribes*: Or with him the Apostle speakes of, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. who hearing the secrets of his heart made manifest, being convinced, fals down and worshippeth, saying, *God is in him of a truth.* Whereas heare one of these *Speculative Divines* preach, perhaps like a discourse of *Philosophy* read, the *Invention*, the *Eloquence*, and the *Pertinency* doth presently move you, and tickle your spirit: But there is nothing moveth or pricketh your Conscience: For it is not to it they speak.

I know nothing pleaseth the carnall eare more then variety: And that stomachs which within one moneth are weary of *Manna*, set more by Sallats, and Sauces, and Kickshawes, flashes of wit, then *Substantiall* food, the Word of GOD. And let such a *Corinthian Preacher* speake the *Abortive* figments of his owne braine: yet their superstitious applause shall be [*Vox Dei*] *The voice of* GOD, *and not of man*, *Acts* 12. 22. For it is strange to see how such an *Orpheus* by his *Melodious harping* will draw these stones, Birds, and Beasts after him; it being their manner to arrogate to the Instrument, and derogate from the *Agent.*

Indeed, they have small cause to joy in it: For, though they gaine this applause from men as carnall and graceleſſe as themselves, who are spiritually blind: yet the solid and more

more judicious know, that a Minister with a female wit is the worst *Hermaphrodite*; and that these are no more like Sermons, then *Michals* image of *Goats-haire* was like *David*.

Which yet is to be understood of the best of their Sermons. For it's possible some of them may be harmlesse, though unprofitable, resembling the herb *John*, which being put into pottage, gives no taste at all, good or bad, but an excellent colour; whereas too often, in stead of discovering of and rebuking for sinne: *Lam.* 2. 14. (which is the first step tending to edification and conversion) they flatter the people in their sinnes, as those Confederates of *Corah* did *Israel*. *The Congregation is holy enough*, *Num.* 16. 3. Or preach peace unto them, as the Serpent to *Eve*. *Yee shall not die at all*, *Gen.* 3. 4, 5. Or promise them good successe in an evill way, as those foure hundred Prophets to *Ahab*. *Goe up and prosper: for the* LORD *shall deliver it into thine hand*, 2 *Chron.* 18. 11. Which the *Holy* GHOST cals, *Dawbing with untempered morter*, *Ezek.* 22. 28. Yea, they will taxe another of indiscretion, that preacheth the plaine truth, and applies it home: So that sinne is rather increased, then curbed; and their hearers rather infected, then instructed by their preaching: being good onely to infect young mens wits, as *Plutarch* speaks of the *Poet Tirteus*. For as Spiders, with a wonderfull Art, spin out of their breasts, curious threads and cobwebs: So these beget and weave subtile snares with their wit, whereby their people fare, as one that whets his knife upon a chalkstone, which doth not sharpen it, but rather make it more dull, and blunt. True; They perceive it not, because these *Melodious* preachers, like some curious Cook that (by variety of sauces to please the tast,) marres wholsome meates, and helps unwholsome. They can please sensuall hearers better with flattery, then others can doe with truth: Who, of all enemies, are the deadliest. For,

1. Either in furthering sinne, or in smoothering it, they betray the peoples soules. Or,

2. In stead of edifying to salvation, they edifie to damnation, being very rhetoricall to discourage the godly, and incourage the wicked; For all their excellency of eloquence is used, not in adorning good, but in colouring that which is evill; in putting hatefull matter into good language: for the same discourse, like the same meat, may be delicious to the palate, and to the stomach deadly: and wit and learning, if it be not seasoned with humility and love, is but *Armata Injustitia*, as *Aristotle* speakes: like a sword in a mad mans hand, or like a flowing Edde, or high-spring tide, without bankes to limit the water.

And doe not many of these Preachers resemble *Curio*, who was most wittily wicked, and most singularly eloquent in mischiefe, against the good; being like an *Over-grown-Toad*, which carries a jewel in her head, but poyson in her heart; which makes their mouths so overflow with pride and choler against the good.

3. Or, if they preach not wickedly, in flattering, or furthering of sinne; yet, as before; they preach unprofitably: as if they were resolved to connive at sinne, as feeding their flocks rather with words, then matter: as caring onely to please, not to informe; forming their voice to the liking of their hearers, not their hearers judgement to the voice of CHRIST, in the Gospel; and striving more to make them in love with the Teacher, then with the Lesson. Because they stand more upon their owne credit, then their peoples benefit.

4. Or, if they labour to fill the head with knowledge, they leave the heart empty of grace; spending their time either in *Curious Questions*, and vaine speculations; which kind of preaching tends rather to mirth, then godly edification; as it is observable, that that age of the Church, which was most fertile in *Nice Questions*, was most barren in *Religion*. The reason is: It makes people thinke *Religion* to be onely a matter of *Wit*; as *Tying of Knots*, and *untying* them. Where in the braines of men given this way, are usually hotter then their hearts.

5. Or, if their preaching be more solid, they rove altogether in *Generalities*: which are no more ayding to practise, then an *Ortelius Universall Map* is to direct the way betweene *London* and *York*.

6. Or, in case they descend to *Particulars*, They passe over the *Grounds of Religion*, the most usefull part of all *Divinity*. For this laies the *Foundation*, the other raiseth the *Wals* and *Roofe*. This informes the *Judgement*, that stirres up the *Affections*. And what good use is there of those *Affections*, which run before the *Judgement*?

7. Or lastly, If they give you the *Grounds of Religion*, and preach wholsome truths, yet they bring forth their *Doctrines* as some women doe their *Children Still-borne*, for want of application: without which the former seemes to be no better then a *Faire Image*, or *Statue*, which is beautifull to *Contemplate*, but is without *Life* and *Motion*: It being the soule of preaching, when the *Word* is brought home to mens Consciences, and applied close. For, whereas those other Divine discourses inrich the braine and tongue; This settles the heart, changes the will, and workes upon the affections. But the Devill is wise: In the time of superstition, he put out *Verbum Ædificatum*; the *Word preached*; that men did scarce know sinne in generall. In these dayes of Profaneness, he puts out *Verbum Applicatum*; the *Word Applied*; that few consider what sinne is in practise. But neither *Doctrine* without *Application*, nor *Application* without *Doctrine* makes a Christian. And so long as the soule is not converted, Satan cares not how, or how many men preach. And so you have the severall kinds of *Non-preaching* Ministers, That you may the better discerne, how GODS people are gulled, and Satan advantaged thereby, who deales with the Church, as *Vespasian* dealt with *Rome*; who intending to invade the *Empire*, first made *sack* of *Alexandria*, where were all the *Granaries*; That so he might make them yeeld, for want of food, and become his vassals.

Wherefore take but a serious vew, First, of the *Number* of these *Fruitlesse* Preachers, all the Land over. Secondly, Then of the *Mischiefe* they doe. For, though they seeme to be *Neuters*, in comparison of those which remaine to be spoken of (as doing neither good nor hurt:) yet they are *Traytors* to GOD and his Kingdome, and guilty of the peoples bloud, whom CHRIST *the chiefe Shepheard* hath committed to their charge. Yea, They are the *sole Cause* of all the ignorance and profaneness in the Land. As tell me, If a man will take upon him the office of a *Pastor*, and yet not *Feede* his people, that depend upon him: To be a *Watchman*, and yet not give the people *Warning* of ensuing *Danger*: To be a *Leader*, and yet not *Instruct* GODS people, in the spirituall *Warfare*: To be an *Ambassador*, and yet not *Declare* GODS *Message* to the people: To be their *Physitian*, and yet not *See* to the peoples *Health*: Doth he not make himselfe *Guilty* of their *Miscarriage*, and *Betray* the *Trust*, which was committed to him? It cannot be denied. Neither is there much difference betweene the Shepheards destroying the Sheepe with his owne hands, or leaving them to the mercy of the Wolfe: Or of a Captaines giving up a Castle, or not defending it against the enemy, when it is besieged. But I have *farre Worse* then these, viz. *Vnpreaching Ministers*, to acquaint you with; and must therefore goe forward.

Secondly, *Vnpreaching Ministers* doe *Edifie* to *Damnation*, and by their scandalous living, or by their Serpentine preaching, do pull downe and destroy more, then GODS *Faithfull Preachers* build up.

1. Great are the *Number* (even of those that preach well) whose *Lives* are *most Vicious and Abominable*; Though one of them were enough to stagger a whole Nation; considering how conversant they are in and about those *Divine and Heavenly Mysteries* contained in the Word: That their whole trade and profession is holinesse; That they are his Ambassadors, and represent his person, who in Scripture is call'd *The Holy-One*; yea *Thrice, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of Hosts*, *Esay* 6. 3. whose *Law* is *Holy*, whose *Spirit* is *Holy*, whose *Will* is *Holy*, whose *Word* is *Holy*: who is *Righteous in all his wayes, and Holy in all his workes*, *Psal.* 145. 17. making us also, which are his servants, an *Holy people*, *Deut.* 7. 6. *An Holy Priesthood*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. His *Holy Temples*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19.

Yea, when they are appointed *Patterns* of *Holinesse*, and have undertaken by their holy conversation, and zealous exhortation, to draw others to *Holinesse*; and yet no whit par-

take

take of *holineſſe* themſelves, but remaine without the leaſt tincture thereof, in their hearts and lives, what can men thinke of it?

There was a *Woman* much ſpoken of in ſome parts of this land, that lived in a profeſſed *doubt* of the *Deity*. Yea even after illumination and repentance ſhe could hardly be reſtored or comforted. Shee often profeſt, that the *vicious and offenſive life of a great learned man* in the towne where ſhe dwelt, did occaſion thoſe *damned doubts* in her mind. How may it then ſtagger poore Chriſtians, that heare of an *hundred* ſuch? yea, when they ſhall perceive them ſo much the worſe, by how much the more they are converſant in the word? when the very *meanes* of their reformation (for want of a good and honeſt heart) becomes the *Fuell* of their wickedneſſe, when they ſhall verifie and fulfill that *Spaniſh* proverbe: *Come Sancto, caga Diabolo*; They have eaten downe Saints, and voyd forth Devills. As that Viper is the deadlieſt which feeds the ſweeteſt.

It was the ſaying of a *Biſhops Cook*, *That all the Noble mens houſes that he had ever lived in were ranke Puritans to his maſters.* I wiſh we could not apply it to *hundreds* of the Miniſtry, who juſtifie that proverbe, *The nearer the Church, the further from God.* As it fared among the Jewes; the nearer they were to the *Sanctuary*, the further they were from *Sanctity*. Or as one gives teſtimony of the Romane Clergy: That *Of all Chriſtians Italians are the worſt*; *Of all Italians the Romans*; *Of all Romans the Prieſts*; *Of all Prieſts the Cardinalls*, and commonly the *moſt leud Cardinall* is choſen Pope.

Not that the word of GOD (which is *holy*, and *juſt*, and *good*, *Rom.* 7. 12.) is the proper cauſe of their being the worſe; no more than the *Sun* ſhining upon a *Dunghill*, is the cauſe of greater *ſtinke*; or its heat reflecting upon venemous and banefull objects, the breeder of horrid Serpents. Well may it prove an occaſion thereof; or at leaſt make manifeſt that, which lay hid in the heart before, (as a furious *Maſtiffe dog* is the madder for his chaine,) becauſe it is ſo powerfull and operative, that it will either quicken, or kill: either prove the *ſweet ſavour of life unto life*: *or become the ſavour of death unto death*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. 2 *Pet* 3. 16. For none ever heard it but they were either the *better*, or the *worſe* by it. It is like a *fructifying Dew*, or *raine*, which fals not upon any ground in vaine, but will produce either the Herbs, Flowers, and fruites of Faith and good Workes; Or the weeds and bryers of impiety and prophaneneſſe. And ſtill the more of this raine falling upon Clay, the dirtier it will be. Briefly, as a *Cholericke ſtomach* will convert all meates into *Choler*, and as Spiders will ſucke poyſon from the moſt fragrant flowers: So a wicked heart will make a Temptation of every thing; and the frequency of *diſtempers* will weaken the vertue of any receit. He that ſhall eate but a *Graine* of *Opium*, and increaſe the quantity every day, ſhall be able at length to devoure it as Bread, and digeſt that, which would kill twenty others.

Againe, Take the dead carkaſſe of a man, and cloath it with a thouſand garments: you ſhall never make it warme; becauſe it wants the *naturall heat within*, which thoſe adventitious helpes might cheriſh; So, if a ſoule be dead to goodneſſe, though you feed it with a thouſand precepts, till it become a quick Library of learning, a Magazeen of knowledge; yet you cannot put the *heat* of *holineſſe* into it: becauſe the *living Principle* is wanting, *Grace divine*. But let that ſparke be firſt in it; and then all theſe helpes will blow it into a flame, as experience proves abundantly, bleſſed be GOD: For although theſe degenerate, yet the ſtory of GOD makes other Miniſters no leſſe good, than wiſe.

But (which is the miſery) *one* of the former will doe more harme, and give more deadly wounds to the Church, by his ſcandalous life, and wicked example, than twenty of the latter can doe good, or heale againe, by their conſcionable Preaching, and pious example.

Indeed, they may ſeeme to build up no leſſe, with their good Preaching, (for thoſe who in their acts are fooles, may in their words be Philoſophers) then they pull downe by their ungodly living. But it is otherwiſe; For

Firſt, Who will regard the words of a knowne diſſembler, [illegible]rowds an Egyptian

heart under the habit of an Iſraelite? who like Ethiopians, are white in teeth only, every way elſe cole-blacke: when, reſembling the Devill in *Samuels mantle*, they are Chriſtians in skin, Atheiſts at Coare: Have *Jacobs voice, Eſaus hands, and head*: GOD in their mouthes, and Satan in their hearts: whoſe life and profeſſion is a continuall incongruity; and his workes Antipodes to his words: when his hand and tongue give each other the lye: like ſome fooliſh minſtrell, that ſings one thing with his mouth, and harps another with his finger. When they ſhall ſpeake like Angels in the Church, live like fiends abroad. Teach the words of God, and doe the workes of the devill.

Secondly, Who will not loath the good light of ſuch candles, for the ſtinke which the tallow yeelds? As it fared with the *Cardinall* of *Cremona*, and *Popes Legate* ſent from *Rome* to *London*, eſpecially for this end, to remove marryed Clergy men, from their *Cures*? who, after he had made a long ſpeech in diſgrace of honourable marriage, was found the ſame night committing folly with an whore. And *Honorius* the ſecond, Pope of *Rome*, who condemned of adultery all the *Engliſh Clergie*, that had Wives; and was taken himſelfe the ſame night committing adultery. Which made him ſcorned of the meaneſt, as *Jupiters* adultery did diſcredit his thunder, even among children. The *Romans* laughed *Sylla* to ſcorne, for that he, being a man moſt intemperate, did notwithſtanding exhort and compell others to ſobriety, temperancy, and frugality. And the *Venetians* their *Cardinalls*, when, in the time of their troubles, he would earneſtly exhort them in the Pulpit to *Peace*, and *concord*; but, when out of the Church, he ſowed nothing but *ſedition*, and *ſtrife*. If we heare a *Mountebanke* undertake to cure the diſtempered heat of the liver, whiles himſelfe hath a fiery face; will we beleeve him? when one forewarnes others of that pit, whereinto himſelfe runs headlong. Points others the way to Heaven, but will not move a foot in that path himſelfe, exceſſively loves the world, while he teaches others to contemne it. Commends the croſſe to others, which himſelfe abhorres. What can we thinke but that he exhorts others to contemne riches and pleaſures, that he might be rich and voluptuous alone? As the Foxe diſpraiſed the Grapes, he would keepe for his owne tooth. Yea,

Thirdly, Who will not both twit the man, and ſcorne his counſell, as that *Citizen* of *Rome* did Pope *Innocent* the third, who perceiving him to make faire weather with *Otho* the fourth, and *Fredericke* the ſecond contending for the Empire; and in a ſolemne and eloquent Oration, hearing him ſpeake much of the agreement and unity, which ought to be among Chriſtian Princes; when privately he laboured nothing but to make enmity and ſtrife betweene them: Anſwered him boldly thus. *Holy Father; Your words ſeeme to be of GOD, but your deeds are thereto ſo contrary, that they ſurely proceed from the Devill.* We may ſpend our ſpirits, and Preach our hearts out, to diſſwade mens affections from the love of this world; if we imbrace it our ſelves, they will never beleeve us. For thus they will argue: *Certainely, If theſe Miniſters did ſpeake as they thinke, they would doe as they ſpeake. If they did thinke their doctrine were true and good; they that preach it would live thereafter.* Wherefore in vaine doe we rebuke thoſe ſinnes abroad, which we tolerate at home. That man onely makes himſelfe ridiculous, that leaving his owne houſe on fire, runs to quench his neighbours; For which read, *Rom.* 2. 19. to 24. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27.

I know theſe men have a diſtinction (a ſcurvy one) to helpe themſelves withall. For if you ſeeme to miſſike their doings, they will anſwer: You muſt doe as wee ſay, and not as wee doe. Which is a bad excuſe fit for ſo bad a cauſe. As if they ſhould ſay. *Wee would have you to be Godly; but we will not be godly: we would have you to be ſaved; but wee our ſelves will not be ſaved.* An Argument more like to confirme them in Atheiſme, then to cleare their doubts. For what will they thinke? Theſe and many more pretend, it is good being religious and holy, and preſſe others to it. But they have ſome other by-ends in it: for they are not ignorant of what they doe. Therefore, whatſoever they ſay, we will not beleeve them. But as they doe, ſo will we doe; and we hope to ſpeed as well as they.

Not

Not that it ought to be ſo: For ſimply conſidered, *the confeſſion of vertue* is of no leſſe conſequence in his mouth that hateth the ſame; for as much as truth by force doth wreſt it from him: And though he will not admit it in him, at leaſt to adorne himſelfe, hee will ſometimes put it on.

Secondly, neither are the people more prone to deſpiſe what they ſay, then to imitate what they doe. Like ſheepe we are apt of our ſelves to erre, *Eſay* 53. 6. But if the *Bell-Weather* or *Leading-Sheepe* takes a vagary, all the flocke will follow him. Whence it hath ever beene the dangerous policy of Satan to aſſault principall men, both in Church and State; knowing the multitude (as we ſay of *Bees*) will follow their Maſter. The facts of eminent perſons become Examples; Thoſe Examples *Lawes*: and it is naturall to men to follow the *Law* of fact, before the *Law* of faith: A viſible patterne rather then a meere audible Doctrine. Yea, we refuſe to be led by precepts, but are eaſily overled by preſidents. *My people* (ſaith GOD) *are loſt like Sheepe, Jer.* 50. And what followes? *Their Shepheards have cauſed them to goe aſtray: they have turned them away from me, verſ.* 6. From the Paſtors example they all take fire, as one Torch lights many. Thus the multitude took fire from the chiefe Prieſts and Elders, to *Crucifie* CHRIST; and the ſouldiers likewiſe, *Matth.* 27. 20. &c. That *many-headed Monſter*, the *Mutinous rout* reſemble *Claudius* the *Emperour*; who, as *Tacitus* obſerves, did neither *Love nor Hate*, but as he was provoked and induced thereunto by others. *Doe any of the Rulers, or of the Phariſees beleeve on him? John* 7. 48.

Paſtors are the *Glaſſe*, the *Schoole*, the *Booke*,
Where peoples eyes doe learne, doe read, doe look.

GOD ſets them for *Copies* of Sanctification unto their flock; wherein every fault is both notable and dangerous: For what ſcholar will not think himſelfe excuſed, in following his copy? If the Rule or Square be crooked, it cannot be expected, the things, that are applied to them, ſhould be ſtreight, 1 *Cor.* 8. 10. 11. 13.

But we need no better proofe of this, then our owne experience. Doe not we ſee in moſt Pariſhes; eſpecially in the Countrey, that of the *Prophet* fulfilled; *Like Prieſt like People, Hoſ.* 4. 9. *&* 6. 9. *Eſay* 24. 2. Doth it not commonly fare, betweene the Paſtor, and his Congregation, as it doth betweene the Figtree and the Vineyard wherein it is planted? which, if it be fruitfull it ſelfe, all the whole Vineyard is fruitfull too: but if it be barren, it maketh all the Vines barren with it. *If the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch, Luke* 6. 39. that is: If the wicked lead the wicked, both goe to hell together. The vicious life of a Paſtor is like an exceſſive Rheume, which riſing from the ſtomach to the head, drops down upon the *Lungs*, and fretteth the moſt noble and vitall parts, till all the members languiſh into corruption. Men will follow their guides, untill they have loſt themſelves.

3. Neither is this all the miſchiefe theſe Miniſters doe: for the people will not onely think their Paſtors hypocriſie a ſufficient warrant for their profaneneſſe, nor alone condemne ſuch as they know vicious; but think all the reſt (Miniſters and Chriſtians) are ſuch: Save, that they diſſemble their hypocriſie, and carry it more cloſely: for they will argue, as that ſtrumpet did. *I wot not what books are, nor what they meane by Wiſdome and Philoſophy*: (quoth the *Curtezan Lais*) *but ſure I am, theſe kind of people knock as often at my gates, as any other men.* Yea, they make the way of truth evill ſpoken of; as *Peter* hath it, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. For ſimple people will not onely condemne all good men for the faults of a few, that are bad, but their Religion too; As the foulneſſe of the glaſſe may cauſe men to diſlike the good wine. Read we not, that the people abhorred the Service of GOD, and became deſpiſers of his worſhip, becauſe thoſe profane ſonnes of *Eli* were wicked and ſcandalous? Nor was it the caſe of a few: for *Thirty Thouſand and Foure Hundred* of the people, being ſcandalized thereby, were deſtroyed, 1 *Sam.* 2. & 4 *chap.* From whence obſerve, If *Two* ſcandalous Prieſts proved the ruine of ſo many, what will a *Thouſand* doe? As there are not fewer in this Land, if their number were taken. You have another example in *David*, whoſe ſinne and ſcandall, as it ſtumbled the good, ſo it cauſed the ene-

mies of GOD to blaſpheme, 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. Thus, by reaſon of them, the Saints are not onely reproached, the truth diſgraced, and Religion it ſelfe ſcandalized: but they give occaſion to others to *Blaſpheme* GOD; and to doubt whether all *Divinity* be not meere *Policy*, and the *Scriptures* a *Fable*, wherein GOD himſelfe and his *Word* ſuffers.

I confeſſe, it ought not to be ſo. No mans ſins ſhould bring the ſervice of GOD into diſlike: For this is to make holy things guilty of our profaneneſſe; and to offend GOD becauſe he hath beene offended: Yea, to give him juſt cauſe to abhorre us, becauſe we abhorre his ſervice unjuſtly. Cannot the faults of men diſpleaſe us, but we muſt needs fall out with GOD? But we ſee it is ſo. The LORD *pity us*!

And thus you ſee, That vicious and ſcandalous Miniſters (admit they be *Good Preachers*, whiles they are *Ill Chriſtians*) doe the *Devil* ſervice, under a colour of ſerving CHRIST: and deſtroy ſoules, under a pretence of ſaving them; that they ſinne more by example, then by act; and, with *Samſon*, pull downe thoſe Pillars of *Goodneſſe*, that ſhall not onely quaſh themſelves, but be the ruine of many others. Yea, that they are ſuch pernicious creatures; that to damne their owne ſoules is the leaſt part of their miſchiefe: For, without Gods infinite mercy and goodneſſe, one of them will draw vengeance upon thouſands; as in the example of *Eli* his ſonnes. What their puniſhment will be, may be collected from *Exodus* 19. 22. *Levit.* 7. 20. & 10. 1, 2, 3. & 22. 3. *Luke* 11. 28. & 12. 47. *Iohn* 13. 17. *Rom.* 2. 1. *Luke* 19. 22.

What hope of pardon there is, for a ſinne of this nature, may be gathered from, 1 *Sam.* 3. 14 where GOD even ſwore unto *Eli*, that the *Iniquity of his houſe ſhould not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever.*

And how GOD abhors, that a *Drunken* beaſt ſhould be a *Soule-keeper*, who is not worthy to be an *Horſe-keeper*: Or an *Vncleane perſon*, or a *Covetous wretch*, or any other *Unhallowed Divine of Uncircumciſed lips, and Vnwaſhen hands*; and that *Hates to be reformed*; *ſhould Repreſent his Perſon, adminiſter his Sacraments, and Preach his Holy Word*; we may eaſily diſcerne, by his ſtrict charge to the contrary, and his heavy and ſevere judgements upon ſuch as have preſumed to doe it; both under the *Law*, and ſince the *Goſpel*. For which turne to *Levit.* 21. *Ezek.* 44. 9. *Exod.* 37. 23. & 28. 30. *Pſal.* 50. 16. 17. & 26. 6. *Deut.* 6. 6. 7. *Jerem.* 15. 19. *Dan.* 12. 3. *Levit.* 7. 20. & 10. 1. 2. 3. & 22. 3. 1 *Sam.* 3. 14. In the Old Teſtament. And in the New, to, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *to* 13. & 4. 12. 16. & 5. 9. 10. *Rom.* 2. 1. 19 *to* 24. 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. & 8. 10. 11. 13. *Phil.* 2. 15 & 4. 9. *Tit.* 2. 7. 8. *Matth.* 11. 4. *Luke* 1. 16. 17. & 12. 47. & 22. 32. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12. 13. Which Scriptures the Biſhops might doe well to minde, who admitted them into the miniſtery: (for they never came into it, of GODS ſending) and who have many ſoules to anſwer for, in that they doe not cut them off, as rotten members, and throw them out of the Church like dirt into the ſtreet, by *Excommunication*, (when they will *Honeſter men*, for not paying of *Three Pence* at *Eaſter*) being as excrements, and bad humours in the body of the Church, that will never be at eaſe, untill it be disburdened of them. For which read, *Rom.* 16. 17. 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6. 14. *Epheſ.* 5. 5. 7. 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. 11. 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. In the meane time they ought not, by Saint *Pauls* rule, to be admitted the fellowſhip of the faithfull, neither ought we ſo much as to eate with them, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. And ſo much of the *Firſt ſort of Vnpreaching Miniſters.*

2. There are another *Sort of Miniſters*, (for ſo they are called, though no otherwiſe then the *Heathen Images* were called GODS,) that *Edifie* to *Damnation*, by their falſe wreſting and miſapplying the Scriptures. And theſe doe farre more harme then the former. Yea, one of them will *Vnpreach* and pull downe faſter then many good Preachers can build up. Which they effect, by imitating the falſe Prophets of old; who in all ages withſtood and contraried whatſoever doctrine the *True Prophets* were commanded by GOD to deliver. As you may ſee, 1 *King.* 22. 6. 23. 24. *Jerem.* 5. 12. 13. 31. & 6. 14. 15. & 8. 11. & 14. 13. *to* 19. & 26. 8. 9. *Acts* 13. 7. *to* 12. And 17. 18. *to* 21. & 20. 29, 30. *Ezek.* 22. 25, 26. 28. *Dew.* 13. 3. *Matth.* 7. 15. & 24. 5. 11. 24. 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. 2 *Cor.* 11. 13.

11. 13. 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3, *Phil.* 3. 18. The ſumme whereof is this. Uſually the Children of *Iſrael* were marvellous wicked, walking in all kind of vice, deſpiſing the holy word of GOD, &c. And, when the LORD ſent his Prophets unto them, calling upon them to forſake their wicked wayes, and to turne unto him; threatning the judgements and vengeance of GOD againſt them, unleſſe they did returne: The falſe Poophets laboured as faſt, on the other ſide, to flatter them in their ſinnes, and make them beleeve they were in good caſe. For inſtance. The LORD complaines often and grievouſly, in theſe and the like words. *They ſtrengthen the hands of wicked doers, that none doth returne from their wickedneſſe. They ſay ſtill unto them, that deſpiſe me; The LORD hath ſaid, Yee ſhall have peace, and to every one, that walks after the imaginations of his owne heart; None evill ſhall come unto you, Jer.* 23. *ver.* 16. 17. *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people with ſweet words, ſaying, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, Jer.* 8. 11. *Yee have wearied me with your words, In that yee ſay: Every one that doeth evill, is good in the ſight of the* LORD, *and he delighteth in them, &c. Mal.* 2. 17. *They propheſie out of their owne hearts, and follow their owne ſpirits; having ſeene nothing from the* LORD: *they ſeduced the people, by ſewing pillowes under their armes,* and rocking them aſleepe, with promiſing them Peace, when there was *No* Peace. And that as one of them built up a wall, ſo others *Daubed it with untempered morter.* Whom he compares to the *Foxes in the Deſerts,* not onely for their *Craft,* but alſo for their *Number*: For there were many of them, that could ſee viſions of peace for the people; when the LORD pronounced a curſe, *Ezek.* 13. And likewiſe for their *Diligence.* For (ſaith the LORD) *I have not ſent theſe Prophets: yet they ranne. I have not ſpoken to them; yet they propheſied, Jer.* 23. 21. And then complaines; That *From the Prophets of Jeruſalem was profanenеſſe gone forth into all the Land, verſ.* 13. 14, 15. Whereas ſaith GOD: *If they had ſtood in my Counſell, and had cauſed my people to heare my words; Then they ſhould have turned them from their evill way, and from the evill of their doings, verſ.* 21. 22.

2. And as they *Incouraged* the Wicked: So they did what they could to *Diſcourage* the Godly. And of this the LORD complaines; ſaying to the *Fooliſh Prophets, that propheſied out of their owne hearts, and followed their owne ſpirits, having ſeene nothing from the* LORD: *Woe unto you: for yee pollute me among my people, for handfuls of Barly, and for peeces of Bread; yee hunt the ſoules of my people to make them flee, with your lies. Yee have made the hearts of the righteous ſad, whom I have not made ſad, and ſtrengthned the hands of the wicked, Ezek.* 13. 22. *Yee ſlay the ſoules, that ſhould not die: and ſave the ſoules alive, that ſhould not live, by your lying to my people, that heare your lies,* verſe 18. 19. And by *Iſaiah* he complaines, *That they called Evill Good, and Good Evill; put Darkneſſe for Light, and Light for Darkneſſe: Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter,* Iſa. 5. 20. 23. That *They juſtified the wicked for a reward, and tooke away the righteouſneſſe of the righteous from them, &c.* Where their doome is alſo pronounced. *For therefore ſaith the* LORD, *As the fire deveureth the ſtubble, and the flame conſumeth the chaffe: So their roote ſhall be rottenneſſe, and their bloſſome ſhall goe up as the duſt, becauſe, &c.* verſ. 24. And the like by *Malachi,* the Prophet; who complaines, That *Their words were ſtout againſt the* LORD *of Hoſts, ſaying; It was in vaine to ſerve* GOD; *and what profit is it, that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before him? Calling the Proud happy: Becauſe they, that wrought wickedneſſe, were ſet up; and they that tempted* GOD, *were delivered, Mal.* 3. 13. to the end.

Thus they were ſo farre from diſcerning betweene the righteous and the wicked; betweene him that ſerveth GOD, and him that ſerveth him not: That either they made the Good and Bad in one Condition, as if there were no profit in ſerving the LORD: Or elſe they juſtified the wicked, and condemned the juſt; as *Solomon* hath it, *Prov.* 17. 15. And who doth not ſee, That this kind of falſe Prophet is every where among us. As mark well their reſemblance.

1. For *Incouraging the wicked.* Doth not wickedneſſe every where abound moſt horribly?

ribly? And, when the godly Miniſters doe vehemently threaten vengeance, unleſſe men returne: Are there not, by and by, others that ſtep up, and finde fault, 'That men 'ſhould be threatned with GODS judgements? ſaying, GOD is *Merciſull*: *we muſt* '*preach the Goſpel*: Or thus in effect. You may goe to the *Alehouſe*, and drink and be 'merry together. You may Dance and Play at *Cards*, *Bowles*, and other Paſtimes, upon 'the *Sabbath-day*. You may keepe your *Wakes*; have your *May-Poles*, and recreate your 'ſelves. You have *Freedome* in CHRIST. Thus they flatter the people in their ſinnes; yea thus they ſeduce, and bewitch mens ſoules unto deſtruction. And is not this *To ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, that they ſhould not turne from their wickednesſe?* to beare them in hand, That they be *Good Chriſtians*, and ſhall doe well enough? For, under a colour of preaching the *Goſpel*; That *All are Sinners*, and ſhall be *Saved* by CHRIST, they doe utterly *aboliſh Sanctification*. For ſo they ſay. *They Beleeve in CHRIST*; It is enough; Howſoever they live in blindneſſe, and all kind of ungodlineſſe; their conſciences muſt not be troubled.

But if this be ſo, what meanes our *Saviour*, who willeth men *To enter in at the ſtrait gate*: ſhewing that *Few ſhall finde it*. For, if a man may follow his luſts, and walk in the blindneſſe of his heart, all his life: And then a *Little Calling* upon GOD at the laſt would ſerve: what hardneſſe were in it? But the truth is, They overthrow all the *Doctrine of Regeneration*, and all the *Precepts*, which CHRIST and his *Apoſtles* give, for *Walking worthy the Goſpel*. But you may gueſſe, why they teach thus. They are commonly of a looſe and diſſoluſe life themſelves; and therefore they beare with the wickedneſſe of the people, that the people may beare with them.

It is GODS expreſſe charge, to every one, whom he ſends; That they tell the people of their ſinnes, and warne them of the danger they are in, by reaſon of them. As heare what himſelfe ſaith, *Ezek.3: Son of man: I have made thee a Watchman unto the houſe of Iſrael. Therefore beare the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I ſhall ſay unto the wicked: Thou ſhalt ſurely die, and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to admoniſh the wicked of his wicked way, that he may live: The ſame wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity: But his bloud will I require at thine hands, &c.* ver. 17.18.19.

And, as this is an *Everlaſting rule* for all: So it hath beene the conſtant practiſe of all GODS faithfull Ambaſſadours, and CHRIST himſelfe; as the whole current of Scripture ſhewes; If I were permitted to inlarge my ſelfe.

Nor can there be a more worthy improvement of love and faithfulneſſe, then a fervent oppoſition to the ſinnes of thoſe whom we pretend care of. Whereas no Enemy can be ſo mortall to us, as thoſe *officious Guardians*, whoſe flattery ſooths us up in wickedneſſe: For theſe are *Traytors* to the ſoule; and, by a pleaſing violence, kill the beſt part eternally. All which laid together: *The Command of GOD*: *The Conſtant Practiſe of all his faithfull Ambaſſadours*: *and the Great Evill*, that comes of omitting the ſame; ſhewes the Deſperateneſſe of theſe Preachers; whom *Martin Luther*, *Urſine*, and many others bitterly reprehend & juſtly complain of: For, whiles they lay bolſters of Down under mens elbows; Sooth and ſmooth them up in their faults; promiſing to bad attempts, good events; in ſtead of reproving and puniſhing vice, they cheriſh it: and in lieu of correcting and converting their hearers, they corrupt and pervert them: As the *Phariſees* were wont to ſerve their *Proſylites*: *making them Twofold more the Children of Hell, then themſelves*, if it were poſſible. For this hardens them in ſinne, rather then reclaimes them from it. Yea, by flattering the guilty, and forbearing to reprove even the fouleſt crimes, they *Authorize* their defects, and ſooth up their vices, not onely by approbation, but alſo by imitation. Their principall care being how to dawbe with the world, and their owne conſciences.

But chiefely doth this appeare, when they have to doe with *Great Ones*, that are *Graceleſſe*, (as often they have. For, when *Judas* is the *Patron*, *Simon-Magus* muſt be the *Prieſt*.) For their ſinnes they will be ſure to hide by concealement, (as the *Painter* hid the *Scarre* in *Agamemnons* face:) to which purpoſe they have ſalves for every ſore. I meane, to

Hide

Hide them, nor to *Heale* them. And it is a very foule clout, which they will not helpe to waſh: For as that ſhameleſſe *Sycophant* licked up the *Emperours Spittle*: So theſe will lick the ſores and ulcers of their *Maintainers*, by flattery.

Neither doe they more ſtroke them with faire promiſes of peace, then they humour them with invectives againſt the godly: being *Chaplaines of Amaziahs* humour; That with blanching vices, and branding graces at the table, ſpoile their grace, before dinner: dealing with their *Patrons* or *Benefactors*, as thoſe *Foure-hundred Falſe Prophets*, which fed at *Jezabels* table, did with *Ahab*, 2 *Chron.* 18 Who cared not ſo much to inquire, what GOD would ſay, as what *Ahab* would have them ſay. They ſaw what way the *Kings* heart was bent, and that way they bent their tongues. Neither is there any ſo great miſery in *Greatneſſe*, as this; *That it conceales men from themſelves*; except they conſult more with GODS Word and good bookes, then their *Chaplaines*; whoſe beſt ſervice is either to further guiltineſſe, or ſmoother it. For as the herb *Heliotrophium*, or the *Planet Mercury*, alwayes moveth and turneth after the *Sunne*: So which way ſoever their *Patrons* incline, thither they bend their wits. Whereas every true *Nathan*, or faithfull *Micajah*, or holy *John-Baptiſt*, or zealous *Paul*, without fearing the faces of any, will faithfully diſcharge their conſciences, in ſpeaking home againſt ſinne, whatſoever ſhall come of it; be their hearers never ſo great: well knowing that whether they be *Commoners*, or *Commanders*, high, or low: none ſo meane, that is *Leſſe*: nor are any ſo *Mighty* that are *More* then a *Subject* to GOD, and his Ordinances. Nor ſhould any obligation ſo inthrall us, as that our tongues ſhould not be free, to reprove faults, where we finde them. They are *Baſe* and *Servile* ſpirits, that will have their tongues tied to their teeth; And were their *Patrons* wiſe, in ſtead of being taken with, they would even breake thoſe falſe-glaſſes that preſent them faces, not their owne.

We know what *Fig-leaſe-defenſes* are made by *Meal-mouthed Miniſters*, in this behalfe; and how they can alleadge Scripture for it; drawing concluſions thence, which the *Spirit of GOD* never intended.

But what place doe they cite? *Acts* 2. 2, 3. where the *Holy GHOST* deſcended from Heaven, in the likeneſſe of *Cloven Tongues, and of Fire*, with the ſound of a ruſhing and mighty wind, To ſignifie a zealous and hot preaching Miniſtery? No. But 1 *King.* 19. 11. 12, 13. where (ſay they) when GOD *himſelfe* appeared to *Elijah*, and ſpake to him; He was neither in the *Wind*, nor in the *Earthquake*, nor in the *Fire*: but in the *Still*, and *Small voyce*. A ſolid proofe! like thoſe the *Pope* gives, for the warrant of his actions; (whereof one inſtance or two.) *GOD made Two Great Lights*. That is, ſaith *Innocentius*, *Two Great Dignities*; *The Papal*, to rule the *Day* of the *Spiritualty*: And *The Emperiall*, to rule the *Night* of the *Laity*. And, as the *Sunne* is *Greater* then the *Moone*, by *Fifty-ſeven degrees*: (as ſaith a *Gloſſer*) So the *Pope*, (forſooth!) far exceeds the *Emperour* in *Greatneſſe*.

Againe, *Peter* ſaid unto CHRIST: *Here are two Swords*: and CHRIST ſaid: *It is enough*. Hence *Boniface* the *Eighth* argued thus. 'CHRIST *ſaid*: *It is enough*: *He ſaid* 'not: *It is Too much*. *Ergo*, *The Pope, which is Saint* Peters *Succeſſour*, *may manage both the* 'Swords; *and be a Temporall* Prince, *as well as a ſpirituall* Paſtor.

Againe, 'A voyce from Heaven (*Acts* 10. 13.) *ſaid to* Peter, *Kill and Eate*. Ergo, *The* 'Pope *may deſigne the Killing of any Prince*; *Depoſe them*; *and Diſpoſe of their Scepters*. With an hundred the like.

But as theſe Scriptures will not free the *Pope* from being *That Great Antichriſt*: no more will the former free theſe from being *Little Antichriſts*. There be *Many Antichriſts* ſaith Saint *John*, 1 *John* 2. 18.

There is nothing eaſier, then to perſwade men well of themſelves. Even the beſt men are apt to beleeve, they are better then they be; But when a mans ſelfe-love meets with anothers flattery, in ſuch as are ſtrangers to GODS Word; They cannot be perſwaded to the contrary; but they are good, and in GODS favour. Experience teaches, that

be men never ſo wicked, They can apply CHRISTS *Paſſion*, and GODS *mercy* as a warrant for their *Licenciouſneſſe*; or at leaſt, live they how they liſt, they *Can Repent at the laſt houre*, as the *Theife* did. Therefore adjourne they their Repentance, from *Youth* to *Age*; and from *Age* to *Sickneſſe*. Yea, it is the generall caſe of all *Libertines*, never to prepare for their *End*, till *Death* aſſaults them; *Conſcience* ſings them; *Sinne* accuſes them, the devill feares them, and GOD forſakes them. How much more, when their Miniſters ſhall *Preach* this dangerous liberty, whereof they too too freely carve themſelves?

It is the faſhion of our bold nature, upon an *Inch* given to challenge an *Ell*. If the Miniſter from GOD allow an *handfull*, men are apt and bold to fathome an *Armefull*. Briefly, naturall men are ſo incouraged by theſe Preachers, that whereas at firſt, they knew not when they ſinned; now they know to juſtifie their ſinnes, and defend that, wherein they offended. And yet you muſt take them for *mercifull Preachers*, who thus ſpare and forbeare their flocks.

Indeed, there is a *cruell mercy*. And *the mercies of the wicked are cruell*, Prov. 12.10. Moſt of all this, which proceeds from *falſe Prophets*; when they ſhall deale by their people, as a *Phyſitian* by his *Patient*, when in the *Symptomes of a Pluriſie*, or *Lunacy*, he will not bee ſo *hard-hearted* as to *let him blood*; which is the *onely* way to recover him: But gives him *Iulebs* to drinke, or *Cordials* to comfort him: whereby he ſuddenly dies, or which is little better, falls ſtarke-mad. Which is *mercy with a witneſſe*; like that of *Hazael* to his Maſter: who having fed the hopes of his *Soveraigne* with expectation of recovery, the next day ſmothers him with a wet cloth, 2 *King.* 8.15.

Secondly, and as they imitate the falſe Prophets of old, in *incouraging* the *wicked*: So no leſſe in *diſcouraging* the *Godly*; whether, 1. Miniſters, or 2. People.

1. They uſe their utmoſt to *diſcourage all godly Miniſters*, both by *ſlighting their Sermons, and ſlandering their perſons*.

1. Touching their *Sermons*. A godly Miniſter, eſpecially if he be a zealous and powerfull Preacher, any whit famous, or much followed: (as many had beene more *ſecure*, if they had beene more *obſcure*:) He ſhall not be able to *Pray* or *Preach*, upon any point of Doctrine, but they will (being diſpoſed to *cavill*,) find ſome thing to carpe at, at leaſt, as they will wreſt his words. And then cut his throate, with his owne knife: As the Fowler in the Fable wounded the Eagle, with that ſhaft which was feathered with her owne quill. And its eaſie to cenſure, or contradict a truth; for *truth* is but *one*: *ſeeming truths* are many.

Beſides, judgements are from every tongue a ſeverall. No man can thinke that the *Prophets*, *Apoſtles* and *CHRIST* himſelfe delivered falſe Doctrine: For they were moved by the *HOLY-GHOST*, and ſpake as the *SPIRIT* gave them utterance, *Act.* 2.4. Yet wee know the *Baalites* continually buſied themſelves, in finding fault with *Elijahs* Doctrine, 1 *King.* 22.11. *Zidkiah*, and the reſt of theſe 400. falſe Prophets moſt fiercely oppoſed *Micajahs* preaching. Neither could our *Saviour CHRIST* be able to deliver the truth ſo ſafely, but the *Phariſees* will finde fault with him, and except againſt many particulars.

If *Philip* labour to convert the *Samaritans* by preaching the Goſpell, there will be a *Simon-Magus* as earneſt in *bewitching* them with ſorceries, *Act.* 8.

And laſtly, where a zealous *Paul* is, there will be falſe Apoſtles, malicious Prieſts, Epicurean and Stoick Philoſophers, *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *Alexander* the *Copper-Smith*, and eloquent *Tertullus* to oppoſe him; whereof ſome mocke him: Others ſay, *He is a Babler, a Preacher of Sedition and Schiſme, and a ſetter forth of ſtrange Gods, new Doctrins, &c.* doing him much evill, and withſtanding his preaching ſore, on purpoſe to turne away his hearers from the faith, *Act.* 13.7,8. and 17,18. to 21. and 24.5. 2 Tim. 4.14,15.

In like manner, a zealous Miniſter of CHRIST cannot ſo preach, as to eſcape the forked tongues of venemous detraction: nor ſo deliver the truth, but it ſhall meet with exceeding oppoſition, from theſe falſe teachers foretold of by CHRIST and his Apoſtles: That what the right hand of the LORD doth raiſe, the left hand of Satan may deſtroy,

ſtroy. That wicked one the *Devill* will ever be ſowing Tares in the field of the Church, among the Wheat, as it is, *Matth* 13.24.25. Againſt which ſowers the Miniſter may well take up thoſe words of *Paul* to *Elymas*, *Act.* 13.10. *O full of all ſubtilty, and all miſchiefe! The child of the Devill, and enemy of all righteouſneſſe: wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the ſtreight wayes of the LORD?* And thoſe other words to *Alexander* the *Copper-Smith*, 2 *Tim.* 4.14.

2. Their next ſtratageme is to *ſlander* their *perſons*. For, as the malicious Prieſts and falſe Prophets ſlandered *Jeremiah*, of telling lies to the people, *Jer.* 26.8,9. and 18.18. and 36. Chapt. Or as the Prieſts and Phariſees ſlandered *John Baptiſt*, our *Saviour CHRIST*, Saint *Paul*, and all the *Apoſtles*, *Matth* 9.34. *Luke* 11.15. Or laſtly, as thoſe of the Synagogue, *Act.* 6. ſlandered *Steven*, who (when they were not able to reſiſt the wiſedome, and the Spirit, by which he ſpake) affirmed, he had ſpoken blaſphemous words againſt *Moſes*, againſt GOD, and his *Law*, Verſ. 11.13. So deales Satans Miniſters at this day, with CHRISTS meſſengers. As let any knowing man take notice of the ſeverall foule ſlanders which *Baals* Prieſts have raiſed upon moſt of the godly Miniſters of note, about *London*, now theſe diſcovering times; and he cannot but wonder, that the *Devill* himſelfe ſhould be ſo impudent, as to broach them; there being no colour of truth in any one of them.

I have my ſelfe offered to many of the reporters *ten pounds* for *twelve pence*, if they were able to make proofe of any one word, which they affirmed, upon their own knowledge to be true. And have uſed my beſt indeavour to ſift things out, whether there were any *ground* or *pretence* for the riſe of ſuch a report, and in the upſhot found them like that, which the *foule mouth'd Watermen* for theſe twelve yeares, have mocked a godly diſcreet neighbour of mine with; *viz. That he kild his Cat, and knockt out the head of his Kilderkin on a Munday. The one for killing of a mouſe; the other for working upon the Sunday before. Saying, O leud Cat! O prophane Beere!* Without once taking notice that the firſt *Deviſer of this Jeere* did both rot and ſtinke, and die in a moſt fearefull and unuſuall manner; as if GOD intended the party, for a *dreadfull ſpectacle* of his wrath and vengeance, to make all ſcoffers and ſlanderers beware of abuſing his poore ſervants, becauſe they faithfully ſerve him. The remembrance whereof (one would thinke) ſhould ſtrike their hearts and ſoules with terrour and amazement. But wicked men are flint unto GOD, wax to the Devill. And (which is the miſchiefe) *true, or falſe*, the common people, that ignorant *Fry*, or *Superſtitious* ſwarme (for in reſpect of their aptneſſe to beleeve, and tell lies, I cannot give them a terme odious enough) will not once queſtion it; and few are ſo wiſe, as not to ſuſpect the men, whereby their Miniſtery becomes almoſt ineffectuall: For thouſands hereby are either hindred in good, or hardned in evill. As lop off the arme of a tree, and it bringeth downe a great number of ſmall branches with it.

To which ſlanders they alwayes adde, that they are *ignorant ſots, no ſcholars, not worthy to preach in a Pulpit*. Who may anſwer them, as *John Barbevile* did ſome Friers, that cald him ignorant Aſſe. Admit wee were ſo: yet ſhall our preaching witneſſe againſt ſuch *Balaams* as you are.

Neither doe ſome of them ſpeake more falſely then others write; for its ſtrange to ſee how theſe unpreaching-Miniſters ſharpen their pens, and how deepe they dip them in the gall of the Red Dragon; that they may write bitter things againſt the faithfull Ambaſſadors of JESUS CHRIST: nor forbearing to name them. Which were not ſufferable, were the accuſations true. For he, who hates not the perſon, but the ſinne, cares onely to mention the ſinne, not the perſon. And though it is juſtice to proſecute the vice: yet it is mercy in this caſe, to ſpare the offender.

Thus they deale by the primeſt men: As *Timocreon* a *Rhodian Poet* did, by *noble Themiſtocles*, who at the requeſt of the *Athenians*, that envied him for his vertues, made report in his verſes, That he was a *covetous* perſon, a *violater* of his faith, and no *keeper* of *Hoſpitality*. Yea, out of malice, and to pleaſe great ones, they will doe, as *Ulpian* the *Lawyer* did by the Chriſtians of his time: Who wrote a booke, to inſtruct the *Emperors*, how

they ſhould *Torment*, and *Puniſh* them: As *Lactantius* hath it.

Now if you aske, why they thus ſlander and ſlight them.

I anſwer. It is a *chiefe principle* in the *Art of Flattery*, (which theſe men *moſtly ſtudy*,) to *wind* themſelves into favour, by *working* the more *worthy* into diſgrace. And this they effect; not ſo much by *ſpying faults*, and cauſes of diſlike in the favoured; (wherein theſe men are as quickſighted as Eagles.) As, by making uſe of all occaſions, that may *multiply ſuſpicions* in the party favouring. So they deale with godly Miniſters, as *Iulian* the Apoſtata did by their Lord and Maſter; who tooke downe his *Image* in contempt, that hee might ſet up his *owne* in the ſame place.

2. Neither doe the people (I meane the Religious) fare better at their hands. For they load them alſo with a world of Reproaches, even out of the *Pulpit*, on purpoſe to *flout* them out of their *faith*; and *foreſtall* others with prejudice againſt them. I need not tell you, that in *all ages*, it hath beene the cuſtome of *falſe Prophets*, which *daub with untempered morter*, to *brand* the Religious with ſome *odious name* or other; that ſo they might *perſecute the truth* themſelves, with the *leſſe danger and oppoſition*; and make it *hatefull* unto others; who looke no further, then upon the *outſide*, or *viſard* which they have put upon it. The Scripture and Eccleſiaſticall hiſtory abounds with inſtances. As 1 *King.* 18. 17. *Pſal.* 35. 11. *Iob* 4.6. to 11. *Nehem.* 6.6. *Act.* 6.13. and 17. 6,7.18,19. and 24.5,6. and 28.22. 1 *Cor.* 4.10.13. 2 *Cor.* 6.8. And many the like, which would be tedious to relate. Neither were they thus dealt withall, by a *few*, or in *ſome one place*: but the people of GOD, and the Doctrine of CHRIST were every where thus uſed, *Act.* 28.22. And if it be not ſo now, let the Reader judge.

Is it not the manner of *all Court-Chaplaines*, *Epiſcopall Preachers*, *double benefic'd men*, *Scandalous Miniſters*, and the like, upon as falſe and ſcandalous grounds, to tell the *people*, yea and the *King* too, That *wee are movers of Sedition*, *Troublers of the State*; *Rebels*, *Doers* againſt the *Decrees of Cæſar*, *Publiſhers of new*, *Factious*, *and ſtrange Doctrines*; *Ring-leaders of Sects and Schiſmes*; *Contentious Perſons*, *Hypocrites*, *Puritans*, *Browniſts*, *Anabaptiſts*? And that we preach in *Tubs*? With infinite ſuggeſtions of this nature, able (as they are plauſibly urged) to ſhake an *ungrounded judgement*. Which termes ſavour of nothing but *pure malice* and *venomous rancor* againſt all grace and goodneſſe. Under which names deviſed by them, and taken up from them; how are the Religious hated, perſecuted, reviled, and ſcoffed at? Neither matters it, how juſt their accuſations be; but how ſpiteſull. Yea, under colour of inveighing againſt *Puritans*, how doe theſe *unpreaching Miniſters load the Perſons and Doctrines of the honeſt hearted* with reproaches? What a multitude of ſlanders and calumniations doe they uſually belch out againſt them? To make them *lothſome* to the world? Which Sermons, a man would thinke were ſtudied for the *Whetſtone*: yet beleeve them you muſt, or they'l take you for a *Puritan* too.

Thus like *Samſons Foxes*, or *Solomons Mad-man*, their tongues *throw Fire-brands*, and are enough to ſet the whole field of the Church on a flame. Yea, the Hill *Ætna* does not wherle out fire more furiouſly, then ſuch a Preacher throwes poyſon out of his mouth: For he accuſeth even *all the Religious*, not onely of what he hath ſeene and heard to have beene done by the *worſt* of men, but alſo of what he *dreameth*. What one ſaith of the Papiſts; namely, that they never found any error ſpued out by the ancients, but they have *licked* it up ſuperſtitiouſly to abuſe the ſame, is appliable to theſe Miniſters of Satan: They never heare any *ſcoffe*, *ſlander*, or *deviliſh invective* formerly deviſed, but they *lick* it up, that they may ſpit it out againe, in the faces of profeſſors.

Briefly, they ſo barke at the Religious, with reproaches, and ſo bite them with miſchiefe (when it is in their power; and none have beene ſo potent with Biſhops as they) That they merit no other reſpect, then that of *Ariſtogiton* the *Athenian Orator*; who, for his leud railing, was called a *Dogge*. And I could heartily wiſh that *Authority* would *muzzle* them.

Thus they *take away the Righteouſneſſe of the righteous from them*: as *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of the

the falſe Prophets, in his time, *Iſa.*5.23. And make them accounted as the *very filth of the world, and off-ſcouring of all things*; as the falſe Apoſtles did the Chriſtians in Saint *Pauls* time, 1 *Cor.* 4. 10. to 14. Yea, as once thoſe mockers, *Act.* 2. imputed the *true worke* of the SPIRIT to *drunkenneſſe*; ſo theſe even traduce all the *Graces of GOD* in his children. Onely they ſpake it *ignorantly*: theſe I feare, *knowingly* and *maliciouſly*. Which makes it no leſſe then Blaſphemy; like that of the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, *Matth.* 12. 24. For Blaſphemy is a *Witting and malicious ſpeech of Derogation*, either againſt the *truth of GOD*, or againſt the *GOD of Truth*; or againſt the *Friends of GOD* and *Truth*. However, they are the *enemies of the Croſſe of CHRIST*, ſpoken of *Phil.* 3. 18. Unto whom thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt may fitly be applyed. *Thou giveſt thy mouth to evill, and with thy tongue thou forgeſt deceit: Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother, thou ſlandreſt thy own mothers Sonne*, *Pſal.* 50. 19, 20. And againe, *Pſal.* 120. 3. 4. *Thy lying and deceitfull tongue is as the ſharpe arrowes of the mighty, and as the Coles of Iuniper* (which raked up (as they ſay) will keepe fire a *Twelvemoneth.*) And thoſe other words, *Pſal.* 52. *Thy tongue imagineth miſchiefe, and is like a ſharpe Raſor, that cutteth deceitfully. Thou doſt love evill more then good, and lies more then to ſpeake the truth. Thou loveſt all words that may deſtroy; O deceitfull tongue! So ſhall God deſtroy thee for ever. He ſhall take thee, and plucke thee out of thy tabernacle, and root thee out of the land of the living*, *Verſ.* 1. to 6.

Queſt. But why (may ſome ſay) doe they preach thus?

Anſw. For ſundry Reaſons.

1. One Reaſon is, *Covetouſneſſe*. They know, that if the Doctrine of JESUS CHRIST ſhould be preached purely; it would quite cut downe worldly pompe, covetouſneſſe and idleneſſe in the miniſtery. And *feare* alſo, that if it ſhould take place, they muſt part with one or more of their livings; and put themſelves out of all hope of *ever riſing higher*. Againe, they know the way to pleaſe the *Biſhops* is, to preach againſt the *Puritans*. And the way to *Preferment* is, *by pleaſing of them*. So their ambition of advancing their *Owne houſe*, blowes out their zeale to *GODS houſe*. I could confirme this, by many examples. But I am forced to maime the originall in every part, that it may ſuit with the ſhort breath, and with the times. Onely take *Ezekiels* teſtimony, Cap. 22. *They deſtroy ſoules for their owne covetous lucre*, Verſ. 27. 28.

2. Another reaſon is, Their *envy* and *malice* againſt the men, and their *graces*. *Some* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *preach CHRIST even of envy and ſtrife; and ſome alſo of good will. The one part preach CHRIST of contention*, and not purely: *Supposing to adde more affliction to my bonds*, *Phil.* 1. 15. 16. The envious *emulate*, what they cannot *imitate*. The ſeed of the Serpent mortally hates the ſeed of the *Woman*: And the world, that *onely loves her owne*; inveterately hates them, that are not of the world.

We read, that *Arundel Arch-Biſhop of Canterbury* ſo ſpleened godly Miniſters, and ſuch as heard them; that he not onely inveighed againſt them in the Pulpit, but ſwore at the *Table*, *He would not leave one ſlip of profeſſors in this land.* And *Solomon* gives the reaſon, *Prov.* 29. *He that is upright in his way, is abomination to the wicked*, Verſ. 27. Which *envy* and *malice* ſo ſteepes their tongues in Gall and Vinegar, that nothing can proceed from them, of the parties *envied*, but *bitter* and *ſharpe* words. Yea, their hearts are ſo full of the *Serpents enmity*, that if they ſhould not vent themſelves this way, their *uncontinable malice* and *envy* would ſoone burſt them, as *Seneca* thought. And yet in this they hurt themſelves more then us, like the *Fly* who ſingeth her owne wings, and torments her ſelfe in the flaming light, which ſhe labours to extinguiſh and put out. How theſe *Nadabs* and *Abihu's* will anſwer GOD for offering this *ſtrange fire* upon his *Altar*, I know not; onely this I ſay; *Hereafter* it will be *too late* to diſpute the matter, when GOD will give no other reaſon of their *damnation*, but this: *I will bee ſanctified in them that come neare mee*, Levit. 10. Verſ. 3.

3. Another reaſon is; Having made tryall of a *contrary* way of *preaching*, and miſſing to be fed with ſuch broth as he loves; as finding neither the *applauſe* nor *preferment* hee looked

looked for, and thought himſelfe worthy of; (though no body elſe thought ſo) hee doubts not, but to have it *this way*. Whereupon he inveighs moſt *leudly* and *loudly* againſt them, that (as he thinkes) ſcorne him, and ſcreene his hopes from him. Wherefore now the *Trumpet* of *Moſes* is made a *Trunke* to ſhoot *Pellets* at *Truths*, and *Moſes* his *friends*. And the Characters of ſlander muſt be drawne in the oyle of the *Tabernacle*; to the abomination of GOD and man. *Arius* driving ambitiouſly at a *Biſhoprick* was prevented by *Alexander* his *Competitor* the *worthier* man; though not eſteemed his match for ſome *naturall parts*. Upon the miſſing his ſuit he purſued his ſpite, by broaching an *hereſie*. That after the repulſe he might ſeeme ſome body, and draw a world of Diſciples after him: As *Theodoret* obſerves. Which is much the condition of theſe men. They know they are no way giſted to further the Goſpell with *credit and gaine to themſelves*: Therefore reſolve to have it, by *bending* their wits another way. As you have heard, what a little man ſaid once to his *Chamber-fellow* in the *Univerſitie*: who taking the ſame courſe, came afterward to *Great preferment*, and hath ſped thereafter. And having found out how this way of preaching takes with naturall men, and how they are applauded, (as I ſhall ſhew afterward) they thirſt after nothing more then to excell in this kind; and ſo proceed from *bad* to *worſe*. As the praiſe that *Sylla* gave to *Cinna* made him commit perjury.

Now let goe all kind of preaching that may profit; let goe truth, let goe the glory of God, he is reſolved to become famous though it be for infamy. Like *Heroſtratus*, who burnt with wild fire the famous Temple of *Diana*, to get himſelfe perpetuall fame. And that the birth may anſwer the *conception*, he turnes all his ſtocke into *foure* or *ſix* Sermons, which ſhall ſerve his whole life at the *Court*, *Univerſitie*, *Pauls Croſſe*, and as he travels abroad the Countrey; reſembling ſome *Needy planting Gold-Smith*, who hath nothing in the inner roome, but all on the *Cupbord*. Not that he ſaves by it: For perhaps the meaneſt of them ſhall bee *Elephanti Partum*, *ayeeres Bird*, or a *child of two yeares breeding*: one whereof is ſpent in the *conception*, another in *faſhioning* the *members*. In which Sermons their principall care is, how to *bewitch* and *ſpoyle* their hearers, through a kind of *Philoſophy* and *vaine deceit*, or beguile them with *enticing words*; which ſhall have a *ſhew of humane wiſedome and bumbleneſſe of minde*, or *voluntary Religion in will-worſhip*; and a pretence of mens traditions and rudiments of the world, *Col.* 2.8. And (to give them their due) they are ſuch *ingenious ſophiſters*, that by recreating the ſenſe they can *delude* the *underſtanding*, and make good ſeeme *evill*, and *evill* good. For they give Dragons *Gall* in a *Cryſtall Glaſſe*, or with the *Whore* in the *Apocalyps*, *Poyſon* in a *Golden Cup*: So killing ſoules with *poyſoned doctrine* wrapt up in ſugred and ſweet words. Yea, theſe Sophiſters have ſuch a ſingular *tranſcendency* this way, and are ſo *gifted* in the *Art of deception*, that like their Holy Father the Pope, they can make *every thing of any thing*. Or like the Sophiſters of *Greece* with their eloquence and copiouſneſſe of wit can make of a *Mouſe* an *Elephant*, and a *Mountain of a Molehill*. For they onely exerciſe their wits, how to *baſtardize* and corrupt the very *eſſence* of things by ſubtile diſtinctions; turning *falſe matters* into *true Syllogiſmes*, or the like. Wherein they fall not ſhort of ſubtile *Carneades*, of whom *wiſe Cato* confeſt; that *whiles he diſputed, ſcarce any man could diſcerne which was the truth*. Whence it is Saint *Bernard* calling good Preachers the *Light of the world*, compares bad ones to *Fogs* and *Miſts*, which keepe the people from ſeeing the light of the Goſpell, and receiving the *Grace of GOD*.

Thus they preach, but it is *backward* as *Arithmeticians* write: And creepe into the Church for the ſame end, that the Serpent crept into *Paradiſe*; That like *Hananiah*, *Jerem.* 28. they may ſeduce in the place of the *Sanctuary*. Neither faile they of their purpoſe: For by this meanes, one of them *edifies more to damnation* then *many* of the beſt *Preachers* in the land can doe to ſalvation; and bring more to hell then they can doe to Heaven: for many ſoules receive from their Sermons thoſe leſſons of darkeneſſe which lead them ſteadily unto *eternall darkeneſſe*. And (to give them their *due*) they have learned to handle the ſenſuall ſo ſweetly that they thinke it a pleaſure to be *ſeduced*. For as a *luſtfull* perſon

prefers

prefers a *painted Harlot* before a *modeſt and chaſt Woman*: So it is not hard for the *Affection* to *Coſen* the *Judgement*. And he is *worthy* to be *Deceived*, that either values things, as they ſeeme; or loves falſhood better then truth. And ſo you have their *Reaſons*: at leaſt ſo many of them, as time will permit.

In the next place, Obſerve their *Serpentine ſubtilty*. For, leſt their *Slanders* ſhould not be *Believed*, and the hook of their falſe doctrine ſwallowed; In the firſt place they uſe to guild over their counterfeit metall with Scripture; that ſo it may paſſe currant. Even as Phyſitians ſheath their *Fitter Pils* with *Sugar*, that they may be taken with *Delight*: Though with nothing ſo honeſt a *Guile*. And, that the Word of GOD may ſeeme guilty of their invectives, and not the Serpents Enmity; Theſe *White Devils* in their Sermons, will ſo fit *Scriptures* to their purpoſe, and make them ſo ſuite with their paſſion, that *Malice it ſelfe* ſhall *Vnſuſpected raile* in the *very Phraſes* of the *Holy GHOST*: And they will beat their enemies, (though GODS friends) with *Divinity*; And think they may ſpeak what they will, ſo it be in the words of Scripture; though falſely wreſted and applied. Let them have a *Seeming oppoſition of Vice*, though indeed it be a *Vertue*; They care not how they rage. Their reproofes ſhall be no other then *Libels*, and their Sermons then *Philippicks*: So the *Abuſe* of *Divinity*, ſhall be maintained by *Divinity*; and ſhe miſerably forced to juſtifie, and continue her owne wrongs; and GOD forced to ſpeak for *Baal*: the SPIRIT for the fleſh; Even fathering lies on the *Father of Truth*, and teaching the *Baſtards* of their own braine, to call the *Wiſdome* of *Heaven Father*.

Indeed ſome that have not obſerved this deepneſſe of Satan, will hardly think it poſſible they ſhould alleadge the Word of GOD ſo, as to ſerve their turnes, in this their way of preaching. But they have learned in the *Colledge of Cardinals*, and in the *Vniverſity of Rome* no leſſe then *Eight Severall* waies of corrupting the Word of GOD, and deluding the world. Which I, out of my *Slender Abilities*, and ſmall reading, can trace them in. As will appeare, when theſe *Characters* ſhall come forth at large, which I cannot ſtand to amplifie, in this Abſtract.

I confeſſe, the moſt common and uſuall way, that theſe prophane *Belſhazzers* have, to *Drinke Carnall Carouſes* in the *Spirituall Veſſels* of the *Temple*, is, by *Miſ-Application*. For, if they cite not a Text, with *Mutilation*, nor with *Diſtortion*, the *Beginning* without the *End*, or the *End* without the *Beginning*; by wronging the words, nor wreſting the ſenſe; by maiming, nor perverting it: Yet, by *Miſ-applying* it, they *will turne the Truth of GOD into a Lie*.

As put the caſe they preach againſt *Straining out Gnats, and Swallowing Camels*: Or *Making a Glorious Profeſſion without Practiſe*: Againſt *Singularity, Cenſoriouſneſſe, and Raſh-judging*; Or ſuch as are *Pure in their owne eyes*; *Crafty and unjuſt* in their dealings; Againſt *Rebellion*, and *Diſobedience* to *Magiſtrates*, &c. Or, if their humour lead them to *Extoll Sincerity, Humility, Charity, peace, patience, Brotherly-love and Fellowſhip, GODS Mercy*, and the like: As theſe (if you marke it) are the uſuall theames they make choyce of (except they cry up *Praying*, and praiſe *Diligence* in our Callings; that they may cry downe *Preaching*, and condemne ſo much *Hearing*, and buſying our ſelves ſo much about Religion) And wherein they moſt excell, whether in praiſing, or diſpraiſing: It is ſtrange to ſee, how they will lay load upon the Religious under ſome diſgraceſull name, or other; applying the *Exceſſe*, or *Defect* to none, but them, whoſe onely care indeed is, if they were rightly conſidered, without prejudice, to live, as if there were no Goſpel; and to die, as if there were no *Law*. When indeed, if they did apply them to the right parties, that are moſt guilty, in committing thoſe ſinnes, or omitting thoſe duties; namely *All Carnall and Vnhallowed Divines*, who profeſſe themſelves *Miniſters of CHRIST*, and GODS *mouth* to the people: yea, who profeſſe *Holineſſe* and *Innocency* in their very *Veſtures*, profane people and ignorant perſons; As I could both eaſily and fully prove, If I might ſtand to anſwer theſe, and the like their *Serpentine Subtilties* in particular; They could not but confeſſe, (as once *David* to *Nathan*) that *They, and They onely are The men Guilty of*

thoſe

thoſe crimes, which they ſo ſeverely condemne in others.

But, if they were not cunning *Plaiſterers*, how ſhould they be fit to *Daub* with *untempered mortar*? *Ezek.* 13. 10. Onely hence we may note, who are *Falſe Apoſtles*. And, that, in *Perſonall Application* great heed muſt be taken: For otherwiſe a man may be a *Falſe Prophet* in ſpeaking the truth, if it be not a truth to the *Perſon*, to whom he ſpeaketh it. It was a truth which *Jobs Three Friends* ſpake to him, being conſidered apart from the *Perſon*, and *Caſe*: But, as they ſpake it to him, and applied it, it was *Vtterly Falſe*; And GOD deteſted it in them. One mans meat may be another mans bane. And ſo I have given you ſome inſtances, how theſe *Juglers* in *Divinity*, wreſt and pervert the Scriptures, and make *Truth it ſelfe* maintaine and juſtifie their *Falſhood*. The time and my memory would faile me, if I ſhould undertake to ſet downe all that I have heard and read, in this kind. For there is not a Text in the *Bible*, but Miniſters, that I could name, will draw Inferences from it, either to *Diſcourage* the *Godly*, or *Incourage* the *Wicked*. Whom I cannot enough admire, though I honour them not at all.

In deed, For the moſt part you ſhall find, if you mark it, that all the teſtimonies, which they alleadge for their owne ends; are either *Tropes*, or *Figures*, or *Allegories*, or *Parables*, or *Alluſions*, or *Dark ſpeeches*: which, when they preſume to expound, without conference of other Scriptures, they wander and ſtray from the mark: For, if they did not wreſt and pervert the word, it's impoſſible the *Truth* ſhould maintaine *Error*. Therefore we ſee, that *Eve* never erred, untill ſhe corrupted the *Text*, *Gen.* 3. 3.

And upon this file hang all thoſe *Duſty Cobwebs of Rome*, as *Purgatory*, the *Real-Preſence*, the *Doctrine of Merit*, in *Blowing up States*, and *Murdering of Princes*, *&c.* Wherein they catch ſoules like *Flies*, and prey upon them with their poyſonous breath. But as we ſhould not draw more from them, then there is in them: So every place of Scripture is ſo to be expounded, as it may agree with all, and croſſe none. Beſides, it is an *Axiome* received in their *owne Schooles*, *That we may not fetch an Argument in Divinity from Allegories and Metaphors, unleſſe we can elſewhere ſhew, that the ſame thing is taught in a Literall ſenſe.*

True. There is not a *Leafe* in the *Sacred Volume*, that makes either for *Voluptuouſneſſe*, or againſt *Holineſſe*, and *Purity*. For to *Pleaſe Fleſh* and *Bloud* is the *Doctrine* of *Devils*, Yea, as it is well obſerved, There is not *One Obſcene word in all the Hebrew tongue*: which is one reaſon, why it is cald, *The Holy Language*. Neither will theſe Eagles plumes brooke the blending with common feathers. This heavenly gold ſcornes the mixture of baſe and ſophiſticate metals. Yet theſe men will make it a noſe of waxe, and with their wicked hearts decoct the very Goodneſſe of GOD to Venome.

By theſe few inſtances you may ſee, how, that under the colour of alleadging Scripture, they delude the people, as the *Egyptian Juglers*, by counterfeiting *Moſes* miracles deceived *Pharaoh*. That, when they alleadge it, ſaying with thoſe *Falſe Prophets*, *Ezek* 22.28. *Thus ſaith the LORD*: It is other, or otherwiſe then ever the *Author* meant it; ſometimes taking the words againſt the meaning: Often making a meaning againſt the words: Either ſuppreſſing ſome of the words, or not expreſſing the true ſenſe. As if they would conveigh away the Gold, and throw us the Bagge. That, to utter their *Damned Commodities*, they deale as ſome *Tradeſmen* about their *badde Wares*; *Put out the True lights, and ſet up Falſe* in their ſtead. That they wound the truth in her owne coat. And, as *Jacob* put on the garments of *Eſau* his Brother, to deceive *Iſaak* his Father: So theſe, in the apparell of their Elder Brother CHRIST, ſeek to beguile the Church their Mother. That they have not the Scripture ſo much for a Text, as for a Pretext. In chooſing whereof they erre alſo, by inverting the order. For they firſt make their Sermons, and then look for a Text; which they take out too with the left hand. Though indeed there is not a Text of Sacred truth, which their Gloſſe corrupts not: For as GOD brings Good out of Evill: ſo theſe bring Evill out of Good. Wherein they come ſo farre ſhort of *Paul*; who, comparing himſelfe with the falſe Apoſtles, 2 *Cor.* 4. 2. ſaith: *We walke not in craftineſſe; neither*

ther handle we the word of God deceitfully: But in declaration of the truth we approve our ſelves to every mans conſcience, in the ſight of GOD. That they are worſe then *Balaam*; who, (when *Balaak* ſaid, *What haſt thou done! I tooke thee to Curſe mine enemies: And behold, Thou haſt Bleſſed them altogether,*) anſwered, (Though he had as good a minde to *Curſe the* Children of *Iſrael*, as theſe the people of GOD) and ſaid, *Muſt I not take heede to ſpeake that, which the* LORD *hath put in my mouth? Numb.* 23. 11, 12. Being ſuch falſe teachers as Saint *Peter* foretels of, that *Bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. And Saint *Jude*, *Jud.* verſ. 4. *Being ungodly men crept in unawares; who turne the Grace of* GOD *into Laſciviouſneſſe, being before of old ordained to Condemnation.*

It is ſaid, *Revel.* 22. which is the *Cloſing up* of the *Bible*. *If any man ſhall adde unto theſe things,* GOD *ſhall adde unto him the Plagues that are written in this booke. And, if any man ſhall take away from the words of this booke,* GOD *ſhall take away his part out of the booke of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things that are written in this booke*, verſ 18. 19. I wiſh theſe men would minde it, and what a faire buſineſſe they make of it, ſo wreſting the Book of Grace, that they quite wreſt themſelves out of the Book of Life.

Yea, *Deſtruction* is threatned to every Prophet that ſhall but *Conceale* the truth: or forbeare to *Reprove Sinne* ſharply; *Ezek.* 3. 17. 18, 19. & 23 8. 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. and other places. How much more in this *Caſe*? For alleadging Scripture to maintaine thy ſinne, and to revile holineſſe is to preſume to wreſt GODS weapons out of his hand; and as it were, to *wound* him with his *owne Sword*. And I wonder how they dare climbe up into the *Pulpit*, with ſuch a purpoſe, for feare, leſt *Thunder* ſhould ſtrike them downe againe. But to ſpeake to them, who have ſworne allegeance to the Prince of darkneſſe, is labour in vaine.

2. Another ſlight of theirs, is this. *Knowing* that if the *Cup* of their poyſon were not rubd with Hony, it would not downe: And that their baſe *Coine* would not paſſe, except they mixe it with a conſiderable quantity of good money: They will not vent their deviliſh Doctrines without a mixture of ſome wholſome *Truths*: like as Gardeners will ſow among the herbs, that are wholſome and pleaſant, others noyſome and venomous. Or rather *Hannibal*; who, to intrap his enemies, mixed their *Wine* with *Mandrakes*, whoſe operation is betwixt *Sleepe and Poyſon*. Or as *Avicen* was made away, by *Annoynting the booke with poyſon*, which he was to read. Or rather like the *Devil*, who, as *Lactantius* ſaith, many times ſpake truth in Oracles, to the intent he might ſhadow his falſehoods the more cunningly. *Theſe men are the Servants of the moſt-high* GOD; *which ſhew unto us the way of ſalvation, Acts* 16. 17. Who would look for the Devill, under the habit of ſuch good counſell? But what's his reaſon? He makes a ſhew of under-propping the truth, but he meant to undermine it.

This old *Fox*, like the *Fox* in the Fable, never praiſeth the *Law*, but when it may make a way for his booty. Wherefore *Paul* caſt out the foule Spirit, that confeſt him. For though he ſpake true, he knew to what helliſh purpoſe he ſpake it. And our *Saviour* another, who worſhipped him, and confeſt him to be the *Sonne of the moſt-high* GOD. *Mark* 5. 7. 8.

Deceit gets credit in ſmall matters, that it may couſen in things of greater weight. The Dequoy will ſuffer the ſimple man to winne for a while, till he hath whetted him on: Then he foiſts in falſe *Dice*, and after leaves him in the lurch. If fraudulent Merchants had not ſome Good Wares, their Baſe ones would not be ſaleable: But the Good muſt help away with the Bad. So, if theſe ſpake nothing but true, they could not deceive us: if nothing but falſe, we would not beleeve them. Therefore they mingle the one with the other, as men mingle poyſon, with good and ſavory meat; when they intend to deſtroy.

And this their crafty and deceitfull kind of wreſting and miſ-applying the Word they have immediately learnt from the *Devil* himſelfe, whoſe Chaplaines they are. For he hath uſed this kind of handling the Scripture, ever ſince *Adam* was in the ſtate of Innocency; as appeares by *Gen.* 3 4, 5. and many other inſtances, 1 *King.* 22. 21, 22. 1 *Sam.* 28. 19. *Pſal.* 91. 11. *Matth.* 4. 6. *Mar.* 1. 24. *&c.*

Yet, (to give the *Devil* his due,) I doe not finde Satan, in all the Scripture, to be ſo injurious againſt GOD, as theſe men: For what is recorded of him worſe then this, uttering it by the mouth of that Aſſyrian Monarch? *I will Aſcend, and be like the moſt-High, Iſa.* 14. 13, 14. It was great blaſphemy for the *Devil* to ſay ſo But it is greater blaſphemy to *Perſonate* GOD, and bring him in, ſaying; *I will Deſcend, and be like the Prince of Darkneſſe.* And what is it better, to make the Scripture, GODS *owne Oracles* to *Deſcend* to the *Diſgracing of Vertue and true Religion*? And to the *Magnifying of Vice and Impiety*? The *Diſcouraging* of the Good, and *Incouraging* of the Wicked? Surely this is to make GOD like the *Devill*: CHRIST like *Anti-Chriſt*: and to bring downe the *Holy* GHOST in ſtead of the *Likeneſſe of a Dove*, in the ſhape of a *Vulture* or *Raven*. So that however, theſe *Beaſts*, (like that *other Beaſt*, *Rev.* 13. 11.) *have Hornes like the Lamb*: would ſeeme to deliver nothing but Scripture: yet they *Speake like the Dragon.* Yea worſe then the *Dragon.* And it is hard for ignorant people, who are unacquainted with theſe kind of wiles, not to be deceived by theſe *Hornes* of the *Lamb.* For there is no temptation ſo dangerous, as that which comes *ſhrouded* under a *Vaile* of *Holineſſe*, and pretends *Authority* from GOD. The Holy Prophet himſelfe was deceived by *Such a Devil*, under another Prophets vizard, 1 *King.* 13. 18. to 24. Yea Satan made no doubt, but he ſhould *Couſen* CHRIST *himſelfe*, when he came to him with a *Scriptum eſt*: *It is written, Matt.* 4.

If *Huſhai* had not ſaid, *I am for Abſolom*; And *whom Iſrael chuſeth, his will I be*; he had nor diſappointed the counſell of *Achitophel*: which was then like the *Oracle of* GOD; nor re-eſtabliſhed *David* in his Kingdome, 2 *Sam.* 16. 18. So, if theſe falſe *Doctors* ſhould not *ſay*: *We are for* CHRIST; they could not withſtand the *True Miniſters*, that deliver the words of GOD: nor *enthrone Anti-Chriſt* in the *Seat of* CHRIST.

But (beſides *Alleadging of Scripture, and mixing Truth with Falſhood,*) they have *other Great Advantages*, as

3. Theſe Preachers are uſually men of *Extraordinary Parts*; being for the moſt part, *Exceeding witty, ſubtile, and eloquent*, (did they imploy theſe gifts accordingly) And ſtill the *Better* their wit, the *Worſe*; As the *Earth*, the more fruitfull it is, the more and more *Peſtilent* are the *Weeds* in it, if it be not ſowen with good ſeed. The *ſweeteſt Wine* turnes to the *ſharpeſt Vineger.* The *fairer* the *Stone* is in the *Toads head*, the *more peſtilent* is the *Poyſon* in her *Bowels.* And it is commonly ſeene, that a wicked man indowed with wit and learning, is like a *Spider* and her *Web*: wherein is more *Venome* then *Art*, as theſe verify. For what *Deſperate adviſements* doe they give us, in a *Fine-filed Phraſe*? And with what *Powerfull and Pertinent Expreſſions*? How doe they, by their *Eloquence* or *Ornament* of the tongue, ſpread *Sweet Snares*, and allure the hearts of men? For they winne not by *Battery*, but by *Vndermining*, which is as ſecret as wicked.

So that, what is wanting in the Goodneſſe of the cauſe, is ſupplied not onely in the Greatneſſe of the Fees, as I ſhewed before: But alſo by the cunning of the *Advocate.* And what they cannot performe by the Evidence of truth, they ſeeke to attaine by the Eloquence of Art; which they improve to the utmoſt; knowing that falſe things have need of foiſtings: and filthy and fouſe things of ornaments and coverings. In the meane time we have the ſame cauſe, that *Job* had to ſay: *Our Enemies ſpeake Eloquently againſt us: But our eyes poure out teares unto God, Job.* 16. 20.

Not that we need be *diſcouraged*: For more likely to be the *Truth*; and we GODS *Choſen*; becauſe the wits of the world diſpute againſt it, and us.

Wit and Learning is like the *Vnicorns horne*; which, being in a skilfull mans hand, is very precious, and of admirable uſe: But when in the *Beaſts* head, no leſſe hurtfull and pernicious. As the Church hath alwayes found to her griefe. How many learned and witty *Hereticks* doe we read of? who were admired for their *Fine Conceits*, and *Elegant Expreſſions*, which fell from them, whiles their *Opinions*, and *ſecretly-couched Doctrines*, were *Dangerous and Mortall.* So that we may ſay of their Doctrines, as *Eſop* ſaid of his *Tongues*, or *Jeremy* of his *Figs*, *Ier.* 24. 3. Then the good, and true, nothing can be ſpoken better; Then

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the bad and falſe, nothing more perilous and vile. Such an one was *Balaam*: where he ſpake well, never any Prophet ſpake more *Divinely*: where he ſpake ill, there was never any Devill ſpake more *Deſperatly*. He could not make *Iſrael* curſed by his *Propheſie*, therefore he tries to effect it, by his *Policy*. He ſends a *Troop* of *Moabitiſh Whores* among thom, that ſo they might be tempted to offend GOD, and GOD might ceaſe to defend them. He had confeſt before, *Numb.* 23. 23. *That there could be no Inchantment, nor Witchcraft againſt Iſrael.* No *Devils*, but thoſe *Shee-Devils* could doe it, *Numb.* 25.

4. As they are men of *Extraordinary parts*; So they have *Extraordinary Aſſiſtance* from Satan: which is another *Prime Advantage*.

That Satan is their Tutor, to prompt and aſſiſt them, to ſpeake in, and by them; no man can doubt, that beleeves *Micajah* the Prophet, who relates before *Ahab*, that there *Came forth a Spirit, and ſtood before the* LORD, *ſaying, I will goe forth, and be a falſe Spirit in the mouths of all his Prophets.* To whom the LORD anſwered. *Thou ſhalt perſwade Ahab, and alſo prevaile. Goe forth, and doe ſo,* 1 *King.* 22. 20. 21. & 1 *Chron.* 18. 18. to 23. Or that Scripture, *Matth.* 13. 25. where ſpeaking of the *Envious man ſowing Tares* among the *Wheat*. Our *Saviour* tels them plainly: That the ſaid *Envious man* was the *Devil*, *v.* 39. Or laſtly, *Our Saviours* words to *Peter*, *Matth.* 16. 23 *Get thee behind me Satan.* But their *Practiſe* ſufficiently proves it. For needs muſt that be a *Serpentine Expoſition*, which *Gnaweth out the Bowels of the Text.*

Now if it be Satans *Heart* in their lips: and that he doth prompt and aſſiſt them: it muſt likewiſe be granted that he hath more knowledge, learning, and experience, then any man alive. Yea, put all the wits in the world together, and then adde Satans thereunto: The laſt (like figures in *Arithmetick*) will more improve the ſame, then all that went before it. So that whatſoever a mans owne *Mother-wit* is; he, that hath *Satans* wit ſuperadded, is able to doe more miſchiefe, then many other men. And it may be ſaid of ſuch an one, as it was of *Cæſar*. *There were in him Ten ſuch as Marius.* Yea, If it be true, as it's reported, That a *Serpent having ſwallowed a Serpent, becomes a Dragon*: what muſt his *Subtilty* be, that hath the *Subtilty of this old Serpent* infuſed into him? We have known poſſeſſed men ſpeak languages, they were never taught; and we have had experience, that *Magicians* (through the permiſſion of GOD) were able to doe whatſoever the *Devil himſelfe* could doe. So that, as an *Ape* is like a *Baboone*: onely a *Baboone* is *Bigger*: So theſe *Little Seducers* are like the *Great Seducer*; onely he is the *Elder* and more experienc'd; having uſed this Art now neere upon *Six Thouſand Yeares*. No marvell then, that *Falſhood* hath more wit to deviſe, then *Truth*. For *He muſt needs goe, that is Devil-driven.* As when any one goes about an *Evill Buſineſſe*; It is ſtrange to ſee, how ready the *Devil* is to ſet him forwards: how carefull that he ſhould want no furtherances. So, that if any man would but be *Leudly-witty*, he ſhall be ſure to be furniſht with ſtore of profane jeſts, jeeres, and ſcoffs: wherein a looſe heart hath double advantage of the conſcionable. But more eſpecially doth he aſſiſt his *Clergy*; by whom, and in whom he ſpeakes; as ſometimes *Clients* doe by their *Advocates*.

When *David* had heard the *Subtile woman of Tekoa*, how cunningly ſhe had contrived her ſpeech touching *Abſolom*: he preſently perceived, that *Joab* had an hand it it. The which ſhe ingenuouſly confeſſeth, ſaying: *Thy ſervant* Joab *bade me ſpeak this. And he put all theſe words into my mouth.* Even ſo, when we heare ſuch a Sermon; and finde it to excell their accuſtomed *Orations*, in a *Subtile kind of ſophiſtry*: (as, though the Sea be in perpetuall agitation: yet the *Spring-tides* riſe higher then their fellows) We may preſently conjecture, or rather concludé, That *Satan* hath a ſpeciall hand in this buſineſſe. And, I doubt not, (if they would, with her, acknowledge the truth, and neither *Turne to the right hand, nor to the left,*) but they would confeſſe the ſame.

However; Their zeale and fervency to defend the Devils cauſe proves it ſufficiently, 1 *John* 3. 14. when in preaching for him, or againſt the good and goodneſſe, they are like *Craſſus*, who even burſt his ſides in pleading for *Pompey*. Or, if neither of theſe, It is enough

we heare Saint *Iames* affirme; That this *Tongue* (*full of deadly poyſon, iſſuing* from a *Corrupt heart*, fraught with *Bitter envy and ſtrife*) *is ſet on fire from Hell.* And that this *Wiſdome* is not alone *Earthly and Senſuall*, but *Deviliſh*, *Jam.* 3, 6. 8. 14, 15.

Now put all together: First, Their *Alleadging* GODS *Word.* Secondly, Their *Mixing of truth with Falſhood.* Thirdly, Their *Excelling in Wit, and Learning.* Fourthly, The Great *Helpe and Supply* they have from Satan: And you will no whit marvell that their preaching ſo takes with men of the world: who count that *Preaching* which *ſaves ſoules*, no better then *Fooliſhneſſe.*

For otherwiſe, were not the danger more in the *Men*, then in their *Cauſe*: Had not theſe *Two Great Curtizans* of the world (*Profaneneſſe and Antichriſtianiſme*) ſo *Cunning* Pandors; I could not but wonder how they ſhould get any but *Fooliſh Cuſtomers*; where the *Goſpel* (in many Pariſhes) is ſo purely taught.

But theſe falſe Prophets, as they uſe the matter, are able to ſeduce, (if it were poſſible) the *very Elect*, as our *Saviour* ſhewes, *Marke* 13. 22. As ſet there be *Two Miniſters* in the ſame Pariſh: One a *Simon-Magus*, that is, *Parſon*; or *Curate* put in by the *Biſhop*; the other a *Simon-Peter*, that is, by a *Speciall providence* choſen *Lecturer.* What's the iſſue? The one comes in CHRISTS name: Therefore him they receive not. The other comes in *His owne* name; and him they receive, *John* 5. 43. The *Fore-noons* man is *Of the World*, and therefore *ſpeaks* of the *World*; And theſe men of the *World Heare* him, 1 *John* 4. 5. The *Afternoons* man is *Of* GOD; and they *Heare* him not; becauſe they are not of GOD, *verſe* 6.

Simon-Magus his Sermons are *made to* Pleaſe: But withall to *Kill*: As *All* Poyſons *Kill not, with Griping Torments*: *Some caſt into a ſleepe*, Or *make men Laugh*, *till they fall downe Dead.*

Simon-Peters, to *Profit.* Of whom the LORD ſpeaks, *Jer.* 3. 15. *I will give you Paſtors according to mine owne heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* The *Doctrine* of the former being like the *Angels Book*: *Sweet in the Mouth, but Bitter in the Bowels*, *Revel.* 10. 9. That of the latter like *Mithridate*: *Bitter to the Fleſh*, but *Soveraigne* for the *Soule.* Well knowing that a *Mortall wound* muſt be *Throughly Searched*, ere it can be *ſoundly healed.* And that no *Purgative Medicine* can bring *Health*, without *ſome Griping.*

And where the LORD is pleaſed to place ſuch an one: It is the *Greateſt Bleſſing* he can give to that Pariſh. And the people are no leſſe bound to him, for the vertues he teacheth them, then to their Parents, for the life they gave them.

Yet, woe is me! Naturall and fleſhly men are ſo blockiſh, and withall ſo ingratefull; That they are not onely better pleaſed with the former, for his flattery, then with the latter for ſpeaking the truth: But commonly they requite their faithfull Miniſter, as *Ahab* did *Micajah*; the *Falſe Prophets*, *Jeremiah*; *Herod*, *John-Baptiſt*; *and Demetrius* Paul: whiles they thinke nothing *Too much*, for their *Un-preaching-miniſter.*

It is not the *Searching*, but the *Soothing Miniſtery*, that carries away the peoples applauſe: Becauſe they had rather have their *Itch clawed*, then *Cured.* *Counſels* are like *Faces*, That which is *Faire*, pleaſeth. Yea, for the moſt part, it fares with *Doctrines*, as it doth with meats. Thoſe that are leaſt *wholſome*, are moſt requeſted. That pleaſeth us, which is *ſweete* to the *ſenſe*: not that which is *Wholſome* to the *Conſcience.*

Neither do the common people like theſe Waſps ſo much for the *Hony* in their Combs, as for the *ſting* in their *Tailes*, wherewith they gall the godly. For as their *Memory* is like the *Boulter*, which caſteth out all the *Flowre*, keeping onely the *Branne*: And themſelves like the *Egyptians*, who behold the *Sunne*, the *Moone*, the *Starres*, all the *Glories of Nature*, without *Admiration*; yea, without *Common Regard*, untill they eſpy a *Crocodile*, an ugly Serpent; and then *downe on their Knees to worſhip it*: ſo they will paſſe over all *wholſome Inſtructions*, applying whatſoever they heare (eſpecially *Bitter Invectives, and fearfull threatnings*) to others; As, *This belongs to* Puritans: *That to ſuch, and ſuch an one*; not to themſelves.

themſelves. Even as one *Monkie* looking in a glaſſe, things he ſees another *Monkies* face, and not his owne.

In a word; Theſe men will make no other uſe of what they heare, then *Spiders* doe, of what they receive. Suck out all the *Poyſon*, and leave the reſt. And it is juſt with GOD it ſhould be ſo. *Becauſe they forſake my Law, which I ſet before them; and have not obeyed my voyce, neither walked therein: but have walked after the imagination of their owne heart, and after Baalim, which their Fathers taught them. Therefore thus ſaith the LORD of Hoſts, the GOD of Iſrael: Behold I will feed them, even this people with Wormwood, and give them waters of Gall to drinke, Jer. 9. 13. 14, 15.* Againe, more expreſſely, 2 *Theſ. 2. Becauſe they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved: For this cauſe GOD ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould beleeve Lies. That they all might be damned, which beleeve not the Truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe, verſ.* 10, 11, 12. This is a *Sure*, but a *Sore Judgement. Will they not adhere to the GOD of Truth? They ſhall be turned over to the Father of Lies.* Becauſe *Ahab* will not beleeve *Micajah*; Therefore a *Lying* Spirit ſhall deceive his Prophets, to deceive him. The *Jewes* had forbidden the *Sober Prophets* to propheſie: Therefore they ſhall have *Drunken* Prophets, that ſhall *Propheſie of Wine and ſtrong drinke; and walke in the Spirit of Falſhood, Mica. 2. 11. Jer. 5. 30, 31. Iſa. 30. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.* Such a people, ſuch a Prophet am I ſpeaking of. For,

2. In ſtead of *Converting*, he *Perverteth his Hearers*; dealing with them, as an *Ill Phyſitian* with his *Patient*; that purgeth away the *Good Humours*, and leaves the *Bad* behind them. Or as *Vermine* doe by *Poultry*; that ſuck out the beſt bloud from them, and leave onely the refuſe. His Sermons being worſe then ſo many infectious bits of meat: For, as that cauſeth all the wholſome food a man hath eaten, to be vomited up; ſo it ſelfe is vomited up with all: Whereas his *Doctrines drive out* the *Truth*, as one naile drives out another, and ſticks faſt in the roome. *Falſhood* after *Truth* is like *Aloes* ſtrawed upon *Hony*, a little whereof taketh away all the former ſweetneſſe.

Yea, ſuch a ſeducing Preacher ſhall be able with one Sermon to pull downe, undoe, and make void whatſoever a faithfull and powerfull Miniſter hath built up and eſtabliſhed in the hearts of his hearers, with *great paines*, in many yeares. And no marvell. If we conſider how averſe we are from *Good*, and how prone we are to *Evil*, by nature; As having the wind of Satans temptations, and the tide of our owne affections to drive us forward. A Ship at Sea is not carried on her voyage, without great force of the wind; whereas a little urchin fiſh call'd a *Remora*, by ſticking her horne into it, will ſtop her, though under ſaile, in her full *Careere*. Great trees, which are long in growing, may be rooted up in an inſtant. *Heroſtratus* an *Obſcure* and *Baſe* fellow could eaſily in one night burne the *Temple of Diana at Epheſus*; which was 220. yeeres in building, *of all Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labour and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen.

Indeed: what things this *Un preaching Miniſter* hath planted, are like to laſt: For he ſo rankles and feſters the affections of his hearers, that he leaves no poſſibility of their amendment. *They hatch Cocharrice egges* (ſaith the Prophet) *and weave the Spiders webbe. He that eateth of their egges dieth; and that which is trodden upon, breaketh out into a Serpent, Iſa. 59 5.*

His Sermons, like *Circes Potions*, are *Too ſtrong for all Antidotes*: And their condition like the *Kings-Evill*: that none but GOD himſelfe can cure: For the parties hereby are ſo *Metamorphos'd*, that either they become *Stupid and Blind* to all ſpirituall *Objects* (like the ſpectators of *Perſeus*, when he put on *Meduſa's head*, for the redeeming of *Andromeda*) reſolving to caſt off all care of their ſoules, and never to heare other Preachers. Forgetting that they *vowed themſelves to CHRIST in their Baptiſme, To be his Faithfull Souldiers and Servants, unto their lives end.* And that, if they keep not their *Vow*, in doing their *Vtmoſt*, their *Sin is no leſſe then perjury.*

Or elſe in the next place, they have the *Toad of prejudice* againſt all good, ingendred in

their braines, which makes them ſee, heare and take all things with the *left eye, eare and hand, Act.* 2. 13. *&* 26. 9. *Iſa.* 5. 20. And then like a man out of his way: The faſter they runne, the farther off. And it becomes a greater worke to *unteach* them that, then to *teach* them the whole duty of a Chriſtian beſides.

And indeed how ſhould better cloath be made of ſuch yarne? Our blood cannot bee good, if our diet be unwholſome. Neither can our hearts or affections, our words, or our workes be good unleſſe the milke be wholeſome whereupon wee feed. However their hearers learne this leſſon from their Sermons, to practiſe what they teach. And Satan hath his ayme, which is, *to make Sanctification an odious thing*, by faſtning upon it, out of the pulpit, ſome vile reproach; that men may be aſhamed to *ſerve GOD*, and be ſaved. As for example. Let a man but abandon his former foule ſinnes, live more circumſpectly and warily then his neighbours about him: *Inſtantly* this his *holineſſe* growes very offenſive to them, and appeares to be but *hypocriſie*, or at leaſt *idle ſcrupuloſity*. Whereupon they brand him for a *Puritan*. And this being the verdict of thoſe, who count themſelves *honeſt men*, and their neighbours thinke no leſſe: (to whom *civill* men are almoſt *Puritans*:) like a *Kennell of dogs* they run away with the cry, and barke out this terme, againſt every good man they meet.

Whereby it fares with Religion, and the profeſſors thereof, as it did with the *Land of Canaan, Numb.* 14. 36. Some wicked Miniſters, like the *ten ſpies*, have brought up an *ill name* and report upon the way of *truth*; and many of the people following their example, increaſe the ſcandall, See 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3. 2 *Tim* 3. 3. So that the godly may take up *Davids* words againſt ſuch a Miniſter, and ſay. *Thou haſt made us a ſtrife unto our neighbours, and our enemies laugh at us among themſelves*, *Pſal.* 80. 6. And this is a ſport to Satan, who delights himſelfe in *ſetting us together by the eares*. Though indeed none but *dogs by clapping of hands* will be animated to fight.

Neither are theſe falſe teachers onely the cauſe of the peoples cenſuring and ſlandering the good: But by their *Serpentine preaching*, or not preaching faithfully, they are the *Sole cauſe of all the ignorance and prophaneneſſe* in the Land. As it hath fared in all former ages. It is the LORD complaint by *Iſa.* 9. 16. And by *Jeremiah* 6. 13, 14, 15. and againe, Chap. 8. 10, 11, 12, and Chap. 23. 9. to 22.

Nor can we expect other in reaſon. For when the *Fountaine is troubled, the ſtreames will be muddy*. If the *Spring be poiſoned, the waters are deadly*. He that would ſee whether a fiſh be corrupted, doth look upon the *head*: For this doth firſt putrefy. So to know the ſtate of the *Flocke*, looke upon the *Paſtor*. And miſerable is that people, whoſe leaders (in ſtead of diſcouraging and reproving) plot and incourage wickedneſſe. When a diſtillation of *evill* falls from the *Head* upon the *Lungs* of any pariſh, there muſt needs follow a *deadly Conſumption*. What ſhould direct the *body*, but the *head*? And what ſhould direct the *head* but the *eye*? Before *Ahab* would goe to *Ramoth-Gilead* to fall there, he gathered of the Prophets *foure hundred men*, who ſpake according to his owne heart, 2 *Chron.* 18. 5. So, when *Herod* thought to make *fooles* of the *wiſe men*, and over-reach GOD *himſelfe*; he gathered all the chiefe Prieſts and Scribes together to heare their advice, *Matth.* 2. 3. 4. The tides of the people move up and downe, are rough or ſtill, according as the winds ſtirre more or leſſe. They have no other edge, but what is given them by the whetſtone of their Prieſts tongues. And, as from the heart all members have their life: So from the miniſtery, the people have their devotion. The common people are ſo tractable, that they will follow their leaders *blindfold*. They practiſe an undiſcreet ſurrendring of themſelves up to the command of their ſuperiours. If *Corah* but kindle the fire of conſpiracy, *two hundred and fifitie* others will bring ſtickes to increaſe it, *Numb.* 16. 2. 3. If *Sheba* but blowe a Trumpet, the reſt are ſuddenly up in armes. Like thoſe beaſts, *Deut.* 14. They ſwallow and never *chew the Cud*. Therefore when *Diogenes* met a fellow that behaved himſelfe rudely; he gave his *Tutor* a whetit on the eare.

The kingdome is all overſpread with *Ignorance, Atheiſme*, and all manner of *prophaneneſſe*, from

from the *Court* to the *Cottage*; from the *Robe* to the *ragged Coat*. Scarce one in ten of any degree or profeſſion that is not *Covetous*, or *prophane*, *a curſed ſwearer or a beaſtlike drunkard*; *An uncleane perſon*, *an oppreſſor*, *an idolater*, *a Sabbath-breaker*. Or, if notoriouſly none of theſe, He is a *bitter Malignant* againſt *reformation*, and cannot endure him, that walks ſtrictly according to Rule. Yea, he ſo *hates to be reformed*, that he cannot *ſo much as endure the name of* Reformation. Like *Lewis* the *eleventh*, who fearing to die, gave command, *That none ſhould dare to name death within his Court*.

This is ſo plaine, that it needs no proofe. For as in *Jeruſalem* there were *Factions*, by which (as *Joſephus* reports) more of the natives and Citizens were ſlaine within the wals, then without by the common enemy: So it is now in every Citie and Towne in *England*. Did not GOD in his goodneſſe croſſe their confederacy, and carry on the worke by an inviſible aide.

But ſuppoſe I ſhould omit all men of *qualitie*: And mention onely the *Rabble*, that like beaſts know no other end of their *creation*, but *recreation*, but to *eate* and *drinke* and *ſleepe*; what an *Army* of theſe might be muſtred out of our *Suburbs*, and ſo all the kingdome over? whom idleneſſe hath diſabled to any *ſervice*, and who are neither fit for GOD nor *man*. And yet did they but like Worms and Inſects, ſpend up the corruption of the land, and leave us the leſſe, it were ſomewhat: But they are worſe; even *diſeaſes* and unwholeſome *Aires* to *breed infection* among us.

Now whom may we thanke for all, but the *Miniſtery*? Either in their *not uſing* or *abuſing* the *Keies*: Or elſe in their *not preaching*, or *Serpentine preaching*: whereby a *Flood-gate* of iniquitie is ſet wide open. Yea, if the *devill* himſelfe ſhould be conſulted withall, to know which were the *readieſt way to throw downe the Goſpell*: I doubt not but he would ſay this, if he ſhould chooſe. *Send a great number of thoſe Preachers which are already ſent.* Yea, (now I remember) when he was once ſo conſulted with: Theſe were his words, *I will goe out, and be a falſe ſpirit in the mouths of all his Prophets.* To whom this anſwer was made. *Thou ſhalt intice, and ſhalt alſo prevaile*, 1 *King.* 22. 20, 21, 22.

What *Pyrrhus* once ſaid of *Cineas* his Counſeller: Namely, *That he more eſteemed his eloquence, then the valour of all his Captaines*, may be affirmed of them. Satan more eſteemes the ſophiſtry of his *Preaching Miniſtry* (perhaps of ſome one of them) then all his *Lay-ſervants*; for ſuch an one will let in more wickedneſſe in *one day*, then the *Magiſtracy* can throw out in *many yeeres*. Nevertheleſſe, let *Authority* looke to their caſtigation, and theſe mens too: or anſwer for their miſchiefe.

But who are they, with whom theſe falſe Prophets are thus prevalent?

Take this for a rule. They are either;

1. *Ignorant Perſons*, or
2. *Wicked men*: beare with the diſtinction though he that is one is both.

1. For the firſt of theſe Saint *Paul* gives teſtimony; who ſpeaking of theſe times and perſons, ſaith; That *with faire ſpeech and flattering, they deceive the hearts of the ſimple*, *Rom.* 16. 18. And it is a ſufficient argument of theſe mens ſimplicity, when they are like the *Horſe*, which *neighed* at the *Picture* of an *Horſe*, as if it had beene a *true horſe*. And like the *Calfe* in the Epigram, which went to *ſucke the Teates of a painted Cow*. Sinne is *ſtrong*, when it meets with a *weake* reſiſter.

How eaſie is it for *error* to domineere over *ignorance*? "*They lead captive ſimple women, led away with divers luſts*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 6. *Silly women* are eaſily led captive by *ſubtill* men. Now no marvell that *Jacob* tooke *Leah* for *Rachel*, when it was in the *darke*; or that *Iſaac* tooke *Jacob* for *Eſau*, when he was *blind*.

2. And to the ſecond, *Solomon* ſpeakes home, *Prov.* 17. *The wicked giveth heed to falſe lips*; and *a liar hearkneth to the naughty tongue*, Verſ. 4.

And againe, *Prov.* 28. *They that forſake the Law, praiſe the wicked*, Verſ. 4. Though you need but looke upon their lives, being like ſuch as have a diſeaſe call the *Woolfe*, which is alwayes *eating*, yet keeps the *body leane*. See, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. 2 *Tim.* 4. 4. *Exod.* 23. 1. For I muſt be briefe.

As

As for *wiſe* and *good* men; who *have the mind of CHRIST*, 1 *Cor.*2.16. And are acquainted with GODS word: They are ſo farre from being taken with them, that they will not vouchſafe to heare their Sermons. They are not ignorant; That *there are many falſe prophets gone forth*; That either *ſpeake out of their owne hearts*, *Matth.* 24. 5. 11. 24. *Act.*20.29,30,31. *Phil.*3.18,19. 1 *Joh.*4.1. Or elſe *corrupt the word of GOD*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. On purpoſe to *deceive*. And therefore are the more *carefull*, with thoſe *Noble Bereans*, *to try what they heare*, by the *touchſtone of GODS word*. As a man will be more wary to try *every peece of Gold*, when he heares of many *counterfeits*. And it behoves men, in this caſe to be wiſe as *Serpents*, that the *ſubtill Serpent* may not deceive them. And, upon triall they find them to ſpeake *Lies* in *CHRISTS* name, *Jer.* 23. 25. And, as they are moved by Satan and their corrupt affections: in which caſe the *HOLY GHOST* pronounces them (be they *Angels* in appearance) *Accurſed*, *Gal.*1.9.

As when they flatter ſinne, and flout holineſſe, their end muſt needs be, *To make our ſoules drunke with the wine of their Fornications*, *Revel.*17. 2. For both exceedingly ſavour of the *Serpent*. As touching the *one*; they knew, that if a man, a Miniſter, a Prophet; yea, *If an Angell* tell them, that *CHRIST* can be *too much obeyed*; he were not to be beleeved, ſince the *Judge* of heaven and earth hath ſaid to the contrary. *Heb.*12.14. And for the *other*; They are not to learne, that a *Paraſite* is the *worſt Traytor*, *Prov.*26.22.

It is not ſufficient to a wiſe man, that they *alleadge Scripture*. For ſo the *Devill* can doe, *Matth.*4.6. Nor is it enough, that they *deliver ſome truth* from the word. Our *Saviour* would not give Satan audience even when he ſpake *true*. Becauſe that *truth* was but to *countenance errour*. There is ever *true corne* ſtrawed under a *Pit-fall*: yea, *Thoſe eares are full and weighty*, which are *dreſt with Lime*, to deceive the *poore Birds in a Snow*.

3. Neither will their *Wit*, or *learning* win the *wiſe* to *heare* them: Well remembring, that our *firſt parents beggerd* themſelves by hearkning after falſe riches: and *infatuated* themſelves, by liſtning after falſe knowledge. Every moyſture is not a *preſerver* of the *Lamps light*: For though *Oyle* maintaine the ſame, yet *Water* quenches it. And hee that expects profit from ſuch a Sermon, reſembles him, that ſeeking to light a Linke, puts out the Lamp.

Alas! They have more of the *Serpent* to *beguile*, then wee naturally have to *beware*. Therefore if our owne preſervation be but as ſweet to us, as our *deſtruction* is to them: It behoves us not to truſt them. In the *Millars* hand we loſe but our Meale, in the *Farriers* hand but our Mule in the *Lawyers* hand but our Goods, in the *Phyſitians* hand but our Life. But in the hands of a *bad Divine*, we loſe that which ſurpaſſeth all; *Our Soule*. So that let their notions be never ſo many and rare, the *beame* of a *Good judgement* will be able to *determine*; that if the benefits be laid in one *Scale*, and the inconveniences in the other; that the *evill will overweigh and ſway downe the good*.

True, a mighty fame goes of the *Tranſcendent gifts* of theſe *Loadſtones*, which drawes an *Iron heart* even from *White Chappell* to *White-Hall*. But the poore ſoule ſpeeds like *Darius*; who finding on a *Grave-ſtone* this *Epitaph* [*Who digs this ground ſhall treaſure find*] greedily dig'd there, but found nothing but ſtinke onely. *Error* hath alwayes moſt *words*; like a rotten houſe that needs moſt props and crutches to uphold it. *Simple truth* evermore requires leaſt coſt; like a *beautifull face*, that needs no *painting*: or a *comely body*; which any decent apparell becomes. We *Plaiſter over rotten poſts and ragged walls*; Subſtantiall buildings are able to grace themſelves. Why doth the *Hare* uſe ſo many *doublings*, but to fruſtrate the *ſent of the hounds*? A great deale of *Oratory* beſtowed upon an ill Subject, is but like an *Onion*, when you have taken off all the *Pils*, there is nothing left. A wiſe man that regards the good of his ſoule; will preferre a *plaine*, *powerfull Sermon* preacht out of GODS *Word*, before the *moſt learned and eloquent Oration* preacht on purpoſe to *deceive*; how ſpecious and ſpangled ſoever it be, with depth of *deviliſh learning*. And indeed it is better to *drinke good wine* out of an *earthen pot*, then *unwholſome liquor* in a *Golden cup*.

4. Nor will a *ſhew of gravity* in their deportment, or of *purity* in their habit, or a *zeale* of the

the ceremonies ſerve. It is not *Lawne ſleeves*, or a *white Surplice*, or *cringing* at the *Name* of JESUS, or *kneeling* at the *Sacrament* will prevaile with them.

Indeed ignorant people are beguiled with *glosſes* and colours, as *Boies* with *Babies*, and *Indians* with *Rattles*. But *wiſe* men will *examine* further, for feare of a *counterfeit commoditie*. Alas! Satan himſelfe *ſeemes faire*, when hee is *dreſt* up like an Angell of *light*, and a *Woolfe* cunningly appareld in a ſheepskin couſens the poore lambs. That *damnable Heretick Pelagius* was a man of *Auſtere converſation*. And *falſe Prophets* come with a *rough garment* next their skins, like a *Gibeonite* in his *old ſhoes*. Therefore we muſt learne to diſtinguiſh betweene *Samuell* and the *Devill*, which the Witch of *Endor* ſuborned in his likeneſſe. And we may eaſily doe it, by his *aſcending* out of the *earth*. Hypocrites thinke as *Brutus* ſaid, when he was *dying*; *That vertue it ſelfe was but a name*, that all *Pietie* is but a *name*: And that *name* they get. Who were they that oppoſed *Pauls* Sermon, at *Antioch*? *Act.* 13. 50. *Devout and honorable women, and the chiefe men* [*Devout!*] That they were *honourable perſons*, no wonder. That they were wiſe after the fleſh, no wonder; that they were mightie, no wonder. For, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.* But that *devout, Religious, zealous perſons ſhould reſiſt the truth!* This is ſtrange, yet true. *Corah, Dathan and Abiram*, thoſe *three reſiſters of Moſes*, were the *moſt famous and eminent* men in the Congregation. And who more *zealous of the Traditions* of the *Elders*, or more *unrebukeable* in his *life*, then Saint *Paul* when he was a *perſecutor*?

The Miniſters of Satan tume themſelves into all ſhapes to make *Proſelytes*. But *wiſe men* will not be carryed away with a blaſt of words, nor with ſome ſhew or colour of matter, which ungodly men never want againſt the good. *In vaine is the net ſpread in the eyes of that which hath wings*, Prov. 1. 17. And ſhall men like fooles, ſuffer themſelves, like *Pitchers*, to be *held* by the *eares*, by ſuch as ſtudy to cheat them?

5. Nor doe they forbeare to heare ſuch onely, becauſe they conceive it beſt: (though that were enough to weigh downe the contrary opinions of carnall hearers. As when *Emilius Scaurus* was accuſed by *Varius*, he made this anſwer. *Yee Romans, Varius affirmeth the crime laid againſt me to be true: And Scaurus denieth. Whom will you rather beleeve?*) But they are *commanded* to turne their backs upon ſuch a Preacher.

It is the LORDS expreſſe charge that wee ſhould not hearken unto them, *Jerem.* 23. 16, 17, 36. & 29. 8, 9. & 27. 9, 10. *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. *Matth.* 7. 15. 2 *John* 10. *Eſay* 8. 11. *Deut.* 13. 5. 9. 10.

Heare them ſo long as their *doctrines* are *canonicall*, but no longer. And whiles they *ſit in Moſes chaire*: but when they *ſit in the ſeat of the ſcornefull*; then (as the *Apoſtle* ſpeakes) *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull workes of darkneſſe*. A wiſe man will not be hurt of a *Serpent*, becauſe he keepes himſelfe farre from him. But a foole either by gazing on, or playing with it, is bitten. Wilt thou then avoyd danger? vouchſafe not to heare them. *Ulyſſes* had no way to eſcape the *Sirens* inchantments, but by *ſtopping his eares with wax*. Beſides it may prove advantagious to the Miniſter alſo. For there is no reproofe ſo ſharpe, as ſuch a ſilent contempt.

Or admit an experimentall Chriſtian doe heare ſuch a Preacher, (as it may ſo fall out) He will not eaſily by caught by the hooke of his falſe doctrine. A good hearer will bee able to take the honey and the milke, and beware of the ſting and the hammer; being like a glaſſe window, which letteth in the light, but ſhuts out the wind and raine. Or like a good ſtomack, that extracts all things fit for nouriſhment, and caſteth out the reſidue as excrement.

An Auditor ſhould not be like the *Spunge*, that holds all waters both good and bad. Nor like the *Sieve*, that holds no water, neither good nor bad: Nor like the *Boulter*, that keepes in the *courſe Branne*, and throwes out the *fine Flowre*: But like the *Scry*, that keepes in the *good Seed*, and caſteth out the duſt and unprofitable darnell. Indeed *ſenſuall hearers* are worſe then the very *Beaſts*, yea then the *Plants*: For the very *Plants* have ſuch a

naturall vertue, that they draw unto themſelves the good juyce, and reject the bad. And the *Beaſts* can take thoſe things which are properly good for them; and reject the evil, as the poyſoned *Apple*, in the *Indies*. But theſe men are ignorant, what is good, and what is hurtfull to their *Precious Soules*. Yea, whatſoever the Sermon be, they will pick ſomething out of it, to *Poyſon* themſelves withall.

Wiſe Chriſtians goe to a Sermon, as to a Garden: where, if they meete with variety of ſweet flowers, they will pluck what beſt likes them, to carry in their hands, to ſmell to, when they are away. If there be nothing good; yet, with the *Bee*, they will worke that to Honey, which the putrid *Spider* would convert to poyſon. And all, by making uſe of the Scripture; which, (like *Ariadnes* thread to *Theſeus*) directs and keeps them both from error and danger.

And, as *Beleevers*, being expert in the Word, are not eaſily taken with their falſe doctrine: So they will much leſſe be lowred out of their faith, by their preaching. *The righteous will hold on his way: and he, whoſe hands are pure, ſhall increaſe his ſtrength*, *Job* 17. 9. The *Tauntes* of *Iſmael* ſhall never make an *Iſaac* out of love with his *Inheritance*. *Eliab* could not *Frump David* out of his *Zeale*: He perſiſts in his forwardneſſe, untill he was brought to *Saul*, and had killed the *Philiſtin*. *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* thought to ſcoffe *Nehemiah* and the *Iewes* out of their *Building*. But the *Barking* of thoſe *Dogges* could not hinder them from walking on their way: *Nehemiah* ſhakes off their impotent malice, and goes on chearfully.

How doth it concerne us then, to *Have the Word of GOD Dwell in us Richly, in all Wiſdome*? *Col.* 3. 16. ſince without it we can neither know what to chuſe, or refuſe: nor be able to hold faſt that which is good. He that *tryeth Gold*, and doth not *weigh* it: Or he that *weigheth* it, and doth not *touch* it, may perchance be deceived in his receiving it. Wherefore, as we *Taſte* our meat before we *Eat* it; and *Try* our *Gold*, before we *Treaſure* it: So let us lay each *Doctrine* to the *Rule*, before we *Entertaine* it. And then, as CHRIST *Taſted* the *Vinegar*, but would not *Drinke*: So, when we *Taſte Falſe Doctrine*, let us *Reject* it: I. e. whiles we follow our Guides, we loſe our ſelves.

Object. But what if all the Pariſh like and commend his preaching?

Anſw. It ſhould make us more carefull, as to *Diſcerne*, ſo to be *Confirmed* in the *Truth*. Not more *Credulous* of Error, as it made *Eraſmus* more *Studious*; by ſeeing the *Monks* ſuch *Illiterate Dancers*. Or as the good knife is made *ſharpe* by the *Dull* Whetſtone.

The Chriſtian will be wiſe and devout like *Daniel*, though *Alone*.

Object. But CHRIST *all* endgeth Scripture: and the *Devil Alleadgeth* it. What ſhall we doe? which way ſoever we take it, it may be wrong.

Anſw. Not, as ſome, that *lie downe* (like *Iſachar*) *betweene both the burdens*; and *Sue out a Writ of Eaſe* for their conſciences; thinking it beſt, *To let all alone*.

Nor yet, with the *Seduced Prophet*, 1 *King.* 13. 18. *Take a private Spirits Counſell*, before the *expreſſe Word of GOD*: which may eaſily be knowne. For that onely is the *Trueſt* and *Beſt way* of *Expounding*, which ſo interpreteth the Scriptures, that one Scripture may agree with another, and croſſe none: For *One Abſurdity being granted*, *Infinite will follow*, *Eph.* 5. 6. *Gal.* 1. 8.

Indeed, they that will underſtand to purpoſe, and rightly know, *Whether a Miniſter ſpeakes from GOD*, or *Of Himſelfe*, *muſt become Spirituall. For the Naturall man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD*: But *He that is Spirituall, underſtands all things*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. 15.

He *muſt* reſolve *to Practiſe* what he knowes: and not be like *Lepidus*; who *Lay in Harveſt under the Coole ſhade*, ſaying, *O that this were to worke!* If *any will doe* GODS *will*, (ſaith our Saviour) He *ſhall know the Doctrine*, *whether it be of* GOD; *or whether I ſpeak of my ſelfe*, *John* 7. 17. *The feare of the* LORD *is the beginning of wiſdome*, *Prov.* 1. 7 & 9. 10. And, *A good underſtanding have all they that keepe his Commandements*, *Pſalme* 111. 10.

And ſo much no more, That they ought not to be heard. Eſpecially by ſuch as are not able, by their acquaintance with the word, to ſpy out their *Serpentine ſubtilty*.

Where note, by the way; How they beſoole themſelves. The *Principall End*, why they *Preach thus*, is, *To get Applauſe and Credit*, as I ſhewed before: Or *to Redeeme that Credit*, they have formerly loſt. But it fares with them, as it did with the *Builders* of *Babel*: who, ſtriving to *Get them a Name, Leſt their Reputation and their Language* too, *Gen.* 11. Or as it fared with *Scripius* that *Old Drudg* in *Naples*: who coveting to mend his *Bleered eye*, *Put it out*. Or, as it uſually fares with *Gameſters*; who to *Repaire* their *Loſſes*, *loſe more*: So caſting the *Helve* after the *Hatchet*, as the ſaying is. For, though in their Sermons they ſeeme Glorious, and Brave, in their *owne, and Ignorant mens eyes*: Yet to the more *Judicious* they appeare moſt *Miſhapen and Ridiculous*. And none, that beare any good will to the truth, but account them the *very Baſeſt* of men. Whereby that Scripture is fulfilled. *A Backbiter is like the wave of the Sea, which foameth out her owne ſhame*. And againe, *Prov.* 24. 24 *He, that ſaith to the wicked, Thou art Righteous, Him ſhall the people curſe, and the multitude ſhall abhor him*.

I grant; They keepe up their credit with Satan, as well as with his *Servants*: For the more creditleſſe, the more fit and ready they are for his ſervice. As *Cyrus* ſaid, that his *Poore Souldiers were his Beſt Souldiers*: *For they had nothing to Loſe*: *but there was ſomething they hoped to gaine* (which may be applied alſo to our *Cavaliers*.) Or, if theſe have a little Credit; a ſmall loſſe is eaſily recovered. If *Codrus* his houſe burne, he even *warmes his hands at the flame*: The loſſe never troubles him: Becauſe in *two dayes he can build himſelfe another as good*.

Beſides, *Malice* doth much mitigate their loſſe. The *Bee* will loſe her *ſting*, to miſchiefe another; though ſhe remaine a *Drone* ever after: So they are willing to *diſcredit* themſelves, to *diſcredit* others. As *Thamar* defiled her ſelfe, to be *Revenged* of her *Father-in-Law Judah*.

I acknowledge there may be more in it, then *All* this. Peradventure they Hope for no Pardon. And therefore they care not, what miſchiefe they doe. As a *Deſperate Malefactor*, that feares not to *multiply villanous acts*; becauſe he *knowes* he *ſhall be hanged*, whenſoever he is taken. However; They have ſmall cauſe to hope; except they amend. *For their End is Deſtruction, whoſe Glory is their ſhame*, *Phil.* 3.19.

But to forbeare *hearing* them is not all. For they ſhould not be ſuffered to Preach. Are they to be permitted *Phyſitians*, who in ſtead of adminiſtring proper phyſick to *Cure* their Patients; give them poyſon to *Kill* them? Were it not a grievous thing, That in *Each Countrey* there ſhould be *Twenty* or *Thirty Allowed Midwives*, who were *Suborned* to *Deſtroy* thoſe Children, whom they are *hired* to bring forth? That they, whoſe office is, to *help* the *Birth*, ſhould murther it? Was it not a *Deviliſh plot*, when in the yeare, 1320. Certain *Lepers* covenanted with the *Jewes*, *To lay poyſon in the Wels*, *Springs*, *and Pits*: that ſo they might *deſtroy all the Chriſtians in Europe*? For which there were many burnt. The Caſe is the *ſame*: or rather in this compariſon there is *no compariſon*: For they had but *Killed Bodies*: whereas theſe *murther Soules*. You underſtand me. I need not further apply it.

It is hardly yeares, ſince there was great care and paines taken, *To ſilence and ſuppreſſe Miniſters*. And they did it to purpoſe. No leſſe then thirty or forty in a Shire, were put out of their miniſtry at a time. But who, and what were they? *Dum-Dogs*? Or *Non Reſidenciaries*? Or *Men-Pleaſers*? Or *Scandalous Miniſters*? Or theſe *Serpentine-Preachers*? No. Not *One of them*. But ſuch as were *too Zealous, and painfull*: That *Preached twice upon a Sabbath day*: That had *Tender-Conſciences*, and would not *Read*, and *Allow of ſporting upon the LORDS-day*: That were *more Obedient to GODS Lawes, then to the Biſhops Canons*: *Preferring an innocent and Holy Life*, before a *White Surplice*: Such as were *Flockt* after. As I have heard a *Biſhop*, at the *High Commiſſion-Board*, *Chafe* at the *Chaplaines*, in theſe, and the like words.

Is it fit, that ſuch a one ſhould be ſuffered to preach, when all the Towne followes him? He

meant; *When ſo many ſoules were converted by him.* As who did feele the ſmart of their Cenſures ſo much, as thoſe Miniſters, who, by their faithfull and powerfull preaching made their Hearers, of *Naturall men*, to become *Chriſtians*? Indeed ſuch *Courts* were appointed for the *Correction of Vices*: But now they *Cheriſhed Vice, and Corrected Vertue.* I may now (bleſſed be GOD) call *A Spade, a Spade.* Foure yeares ſince this *Gall* was ſo impatient of ſpurring, that a Miniſter could not *Speake the Truth*, without *Hazarding the Pillory, Whipping Poſt, Loſſe of Eares, ſlitting of Noſtrils, and Branding in the face*: The caſe of Doctor *Layton* for a Book: that, if wiſe men may be beleeved, hath a world of worth in it. As for Mr. *Prynne*, Dr. *Baſtwicke* and Mr. *Burton*, they are freſh in memory.

And, having ſilenc'd theſe; *Whom did they place in their roomes*? But ſuch; (moſt of them) that *Even the Devill himſelfe* (if he did make, and ſend forth Miniſters) *Could not finde worſe upon the earth*: For, if he would have *worſe, he muſt bring them from hell.*

The *Synod of Conſtantinople*, out of experience, did find, that in thoſe times, among *fifty Catholike Prieſts*, hardly one could be found, that was not a *Notorious Fornicator*: And that there was great want of Miniſters; onely for the *Prohibition of Matrimony.* Which made *Pius* the *ſecond*, a *Learned Pope*, (contrary to his former practiſe) leave this behind him in writing. *There is great cauſe why the Clergy ſhould be deprived of Marriage: But greater cauſe, why they ſhould be ſuffered to marry.* And doe not we, in theſe times, find by experience, That among *fifty* of theſe *Biſhops-Prieſts*, hardly one can be found, that is not a *bitter Malignant* to *Holineſſe*: and a *Deſpiſer of them that be good*: If he be not alſo a *Rank-Whoremaſter*, or a *Common Drunkard.* And that, by this meanes, there is great want of *Good Miniſters.* As hath beene plentifully proved to *This Parliament*, and may be found upon *Record*, *Even ſuch*, that if *Holy David* were now alive, he would not admit *A Man* of them to be his *Chaplaine.*

I grant, their wicked hearts help them to *Pretences*, that carry a *Faire ſhew*, why they *Silence ſo many Precißians*, and put in *ſo many profane ones*: But their Conſciences cannot but tell them of *more and weightier Reaſons*, why theſe ſhould rather *be Caſhired*; and the *Number of the other increaſed*; The Godly *cheriſhed, and the profane curbed, and utterly reſtrained.* But becauſe they *want honeſty and ingenuity*, to *confeſſe* what they thinke, I will declare them unto you.

1. They ought to be *Silene'd.* Firſt, Becauſe (as I have ſhewne) *They are falſe Prophets; and teach Lies, in CHRISTS name.* Now, if a man be *opinionared* againſt the *Truth*, it is not Anſwerable. *Si quis docuerit*: But, if a man *teach ſuch a Doctrine*, It is *Abominable.*

Or, if they *Preach not falſe Doctrine*; they will *ſo ſophiſticate* the *Truth*, with the *Leaven of maliciouſneſſe*; that there ſhall be no difference. Like, as if they ſhould break the bread of life to the people, and throw in *Crooked Pins*, to *Choak* them.

Or we may ſay of them, as *Luther* of the *Popes*: *They hold us out Bread, on the point of a Sword: And, when we come nigh, they beat us with the Hilt.*

Or laſtly; If they deliver nothing but the *wholeſome Truth*, They will *Turne it into a lie*; by *miſapplication.* And he is not worthy to be a *Phyſitian*, who giveth *Vomits*, in place of *Cordials*: And *Cordials* in ſtead of *Vomits.*

2. *Becauſe they infect almoſt all that heare their Sermons*, and make them as *Bitter Malignants* to Religion, and *ſcoffers* at Holineſſe, as themſelves; as I have ſhewen. And ſo in ſtead of becomming *Inſtruments* of their peoples *Salvation*; they become (as farre as in them lies) *Authors* of their *Damnation.* Now, If one *Breake* the *Law*, that's a *Perſonall ſin.* But if he *Teach ſo*, that's a *Peſtilent ſinne.*

3. *For that the Goſpel, and the Name of GOD is Blaſphemed*, and an *Evill ſcandall* raiſed upon the *Godly*, by reaſon of their *ſlandring* them, and *diſgracing Goodneſſe* in their Sermons. And how unſufferable this is, in ſuch as are GODS *Ambaſſadors*, and have the *charge of ſoules*, may be ſeene in the example of *Eli's* ſons, 1 *Sam.* 3. & 4. *chap.* And in GODS dealing with *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, when he ſent out *Fire*, and *devoured* them, for offering

ſtrange

ſtrange fire upon his Altar: Giving no other reaſon, but this: *I will be ſanctified of them that draw neare me*, *Levit.*10.2.3.

Are *ſuch fit to ſucceed the* LORD *Jeſus*? and have the *charge of ſoules*, who *preach lies* in his *Name*? even *forcing* GOD to ſpeak for *Baal*: the *Spirit* for the *Fleſh*? Or, if they be *connived at*; How *fearfull* ſhall their *Reckoning* be, when they ſhall be *ſummon'd* to appeare before *That High Judge*, at the great day of *Accounts*.

4. *Becauſe ſo long as he ſupplies the Roome of a Miniſter*, he *keeps out another* that would *Preach better*: and perhaps *ſave thoſe poore ſoules*, whom *he deſtroyes*.

An ill man in the Church is but like ſome *Shrubby-Tree* in a *Garden*, whoſe ſhade not onely keeps better plants from growing; but drawes away the nouriſhment from the reſt; that would beare us fruit. Or as a great *Oak* in a *Grove*, which not onely *pines* all the *under-woods* near it: but ſpoyles the *Graſſe* that ſhould *feed* the *Cattell*. So that it were better for the *Pariſh* to have no *Miniſter* at all, then ſuch a one. For though it be miſerable to want food for the ſoule: yet better nothing, then onely poyſon. A Blank doth farre better in a Roome, then an ill filling.

5. *It is moſt juſt, equall, and proper*; That having ſo much abuſed their tongues, they ſhould, in ſome ſort, *loſe* the uſe of them. We read, That when *Tiberius* the Emperour paſt ſentence at the barre, upon a *Great Talker*, and *Railer* with his *Tongue*: he commanded, that for part of his puniſhment, he ſhould not ſpeak a word for the ſpace of *one whole yeare* after: but ponder upon what he had formerly ſpoken, and ſtudy better how to ſpeak when it came againe to his turne.

True. *Our Worthies in Parliament* have (Bleſſed be GOD) taken the like courſe, with many of them. And I hope their *many Eyes* will find out the *Reſt* in time. Though it is great pity they have beene *ſuffered ſo long*: For theſe *Serpents* would be *cruſht* in the Beginning, even in the *Egge*, to prevent their *Hiſſing*, *Stinging*, *and Poyſoning*. So ſhould their people be preſerved.

The way to ſuppreſſe a *Schiſme* is, to *Cut off the head*. For it will be hard for a *Body* to move *Headleſſe*. Yea, the *Head* being cut off, the *Members Die*: the *Generall* being ſlaine, the *Army* periſheth.

6. This courſe would prove very profitable both to *Themſelves*, and to their *Hearers*.

1. It were *Profitable* for *Themſelves* to be *Silenc'd*. For the *Fewer* they *Seduce*, the *Fewer ſoules* they ſhall *anſwer* for. And, with ſuch, as to *Doe Evill* is common, even to *Doe nothing Profitable* is, and in a manner *Commendable*. Yea rather then goe on in their Courſe, It were an *Happy turne* for *Themſelves*, if GOD would doe by them, as he did with the Emperour *Iuſtinian*; who continuing obſtinate in the *Hereſie of Pelagius*, was ſuddenly deprived of his *Senſes*, and became a *Foole*. For by this meanes they ſhould *Doe Leſſe Evill* here; and conſequently *Suffer Leſſe Evill* hereafter.

2. It were *Happy* alſo, for their *Hearers*: whom for the preſent they ſerve no otherwiſe, then *Buſiris* (whom *Hercules ſlew*) ſerved the poore people: who killed ſuch as came to him for hoſpitality. Or *Magnus Epiſcopus* the *Biſhop* of *Mentz*: who burned an innumerable company of poore people, that cried to him for help, in a famine calling them Rats. Or *Theodoſius* the Prince, who fraudulently called together at *Theſſalonica*, *ſeven thouſand innocent perſons*, as it were, to *See Plaies*; and then ſent in *Souldiers* among them, & ſlew them. For, under a colour of *Feeding* and *Curing* their ſoules, they *Impoyſon*, and *Kill* them. Their Sermons reſembling a *Poyſoned Fountaine*, in the way, which the innocent and thirſty paſſenger ſeeing, is glad to drink of: but in drinking is *Sure* to die for it.

Or in caſe they be leſſe cruell, and doe anſwer the hunger and thirſt of an empty ſoule: It ſhall be no otherwiſe, then the *Iewes* did our *Saviours*: who *gave him Gall* for his *Meat*, and in his *thirſt Vineger* to drink, *Pſal.* 69.21.

But *Woe is me*! How many wayes have theſe laſt times holpen the *Devill*? And how neare was Satan to a *Full Principality* on earth; when he had not onely his *Miniſters*, and that of divers kinds, to preach for him: But his *Prelates* alſo to put downe them, that

did preach for *CHRIST*? Yea, when he had not onely a *Greater* and more *Numerous Clergy*: but farre more *Lay-ſervants* alſo, then GOD *himſelfe*; even in this *Noontide* of the *Goſpel*; and in this *Land*, the *Glory of Chriſtendome*. As I could tell you how Satan bare ſway in the *Magiſtracy*, and *Courts* of Juſtice, in the Common-wealth, as well as in the Church. For, (to paſſe by the many *Iuſtices* of *Peace*, and other inferiour officers, all the Land over, who were not onely *Vicious* themſelves, but *Cheriſhers* of *Vice*, in the ſeverall places of their abode.) What *Court* was there almoſt in the Land, where *Iuſtice* was not *bought* and *ſold*? Or admit *Bribery* would not doe, but *Juſtice* would puniſh a malefactor. Might not the *Protection* of *ſome Great one* be procured to deliver him? So that the *Law* might put up his *Dagger*. For, by this meanes, a *leud perſon* need not feare to offend, that had a *Great man* to his friend: or had not a *Great man* to his enemy. *Tegunt eum Umbroſa nemora umbraculis ſuis*: *The ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadowes.* The Robber rifles a paſſenger, is apprehended and indited: The booty he gives to ſome *Mighty one*, to procure his *Pardon*; and eſcapes. Thus the poore Traveller is *robbed doubly*, both of his *money*, and all *reliefe* of the *Law*: and the protector of the lewd perſon is become the greater thiefe.

But, in ſpeaking of theſe I have ſtept out of my way, as once a Grave *Divine* ſtept out of his Text, to enveigh againſt *ſwearing*; that ſo he might meet with a *Great Perſonage*, that had ridde as farre out of his way to heare him. Onely I mention it, becauſe my words may happen to reach to ſome, whom it concernes. If ſo; In the *bowels* of CHRIST let me (the *moſt unworthy*) be bold to move your *Wiſdomes*, *and your Care*, to *Goe on* to *Redreſſe* it; as you have (bleſſed be GOD) begun.

Oh! It were *ſpeciall newes* to be told in *Gath*, and would ſound terribly in the ſtreets of *Askalon*: It would goe *Cold* to the heart of the Devill, and *ſhake* the gates of hell: That *none might beare ſway*, either in Church, or Common wealth, but *ſuch as feare GOD*, and ſeeke his glory. In the meane time the Church were happy, if ſhe had eſcaped the *ingenious ſollicitations* of theſe Fiends; who have not onely *troubled* the *waters of our comfort*: but *poyſoned* the very *Spings* of *Life*. They have brought into GODS *Sanctuary*, in ſtead of *Levites* to *divide* the *Word*, *Gibeonites* not worthy to *divide Wood*. They have brought them in. The LORD of his mercy caſt them out!

It is ſaid, *Rev.* 18. That the Merchants of that great City *Babylon* (by which Expoſiters underſtand *Rome*) traded not onely in *Gold*, *Silver*, *and precious ſtones*, *fine Linnen*, *and Purple*, *Silke and Scarlet*, *Cinnamon and odours*, *Ointments*, *and Oyle*, *and Wine*, *&c.* but alſo in *ſoules of men*, *verſ.* 13. Our *Prelates* have affirmed in open Court, That they have their *Ordination* from the ſaid *Rome*. And, without controverſie, Their *Principall Traffique* hath beene in the Soules of men. For, as if they had conſpired the death of the Church; and plotted together to famiſh and ſtarve the people of GOD, they have laboured to ſuppreſſe and diminiſh the true *Shepheards*; and to ſet up *Wolves* in their ſtead. And whereas, in moſt places they had no teaching at *Home*, they would not ſuffer them to ſeek abroad: but would keep them ſtill in ignorance and blindneſſe. And, under pretence of *Order*, their *Soules* muſt periſh. So ſerving faithfull Miniſters and their people, as the *Prieſts* and *Phariſees* ſerved CHRIST and his *Hearers*: *forbidding him to preach*; and reſtraining the people from hearing him. For what ſay they? *If we let him thus alone*, *all men will beleeve in him*, *John* 11. 48. Or as the *Jewes* dealt with Saint *Paul*, and his *Hearers*. Of whom he thus ſpeaks. *They perſecute their owne Prophets*, *and forbid us alſo to ſpeake to the Gentiles*, *that they might be ſaved. To fill up their ſinnes*; *That the wrath of God might come on them to the uttermoſt*, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 16.

Oh! Wofull times! Oh! Curſed Merchants! That Traffique in the *Bloud of Soules*. But, ſeeing they are content to venture themſelves upon GODS vengeance, I leave them to their *Judge*. In the meane time, let it rejoyce all good hearts, That *our Grave Senators* have, in ſome meaſure, ſhortned their armes, and broken their hornes Yea, let it be our conſtant prayer to GOD, that the *Keyes* (which they *counterfeited*) may never more be com-

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mitted to such *Cerberean-Porters*, as shut the gates upon CHRIST'S friends, and entertaine his foes: To such as onely measure their *Right* by their *Power*: And therefore will doe injury, because they can doe it: To such *Hypocrites*, as looke to small things, (as the *Crosse*, *Surplice*, *Holy-daies*, &c.) And over-looke the Great, as the *Sabbath*, the *second Commandement*, the *due administring* of the *Word*, and *Sacraments*. For certainly it cannot be said of them, as our *Saviour* said of the *Asse*. "*The LORD hath need of them.* Yea, have we not found by experience; That whiles these *Mermaids dance and play*; It portends nothing but *Destruction* to the *Mariners*: For, though they call themselves the *chiefe-Priests*, they are indeed CHRIST'S *chiefe-enemies*.

And is there any reason, that those should stand at the *Sterne*, or be appointed the *Champions* of the LORD'S battell, who have embraced this present world, and seeke after nothing but *Gaine* and *Glory*? They fight for their *Bellies*, and not for the LORD.

Once in *Israel* there were three Garisons of enemies, all armed with all manner of weapons for offence: yet against all these, the *Israelites* had but two Swords for defence. Yet it pleased GOD, that those two were enough. So we have in our Land a world of enemies armed with all the strength and policy of hell. If we have but two Swords: One the Sword of the *Spirit*; that is, *Doctrine*: The other, the Sword of the *Church*; that is, *Discipline*: (I meane of CHRIST'S own institution) We need not feare, but they will be enough to keep sinne, and GOD'S enemies from *domineering*, as they have done hitherto. Which GOD grant, for his CHRIST'S sake.

7. And lastly, *Their Craft is so great, and their Number so many*, that (unlesse they be *Silenc'd*) CHRIST'S *faithfull* Ministers shall doe little good, or that good will little appeare.

1. For their *Number*. I suppose our times out-strip all former ages. For though among the *Jewes* there were alwayes false Prophets, 1 *King.* 22. 6. 11. to 17. & 18 22. to 42. 2 *King.* 10. 19. 25. *Jer.* 14. 15. 17. & 6. 14. & 23. 25 to 35. 2 *Chron.* 18. 5. *Ezek.* 13. 4. & 22. 25. *Micah* 2. 11. *Isa.* 30. 10. *Zeph* 3. 4. And in the Primitive times of the *Gospel*, false Apostles, and false Teachers, who were enemies to the *Crosse* of CHRIST *Phil.* 3. 18. 19. And although most of the Fathers and Saints of GOD, which have writ; have in their severall times, much complained of false and unprofitable teachers: Yet the *Holy GHOST* speakes chiefely of *these last and worst times*. *Many shall come in my Name* (saith our *Saviour*, *Matth.* 24. 5.) And *many false Prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many*, *vers.* 11. And againe, *There shall arise false-Christs, and false Prophets, that, (if it were possible) they should deceive the very Elect*, *vers.* 24. And no wonder there be false Apostles, and false Prophets, when there are *False Christs*. "*I know* (saith Saint *Paul*) *that after my departure grievous Wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flocke*, *Acts* 20. 29. And *of your owne selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things; to draw Disciples after them*, *vers.* 30. 31.

But the better to know their *Number*, I wish there were a *Survay* made throughout the Kingdome, and Dominion of *Wales*; and a view taken first of such as have *Great Titles*, and *Roomes* in the Church; As *Bishops*, *Deanes*, *Arch-Deacons*, &c. And yet feed not any flocks of Sheep or Lambs.

2. Of such as apply all their great learning to *get Livings*, and to *Heap Benefice upon Benefice*; not at all *caring* for *Soules*.

3. That you would number, if you can, those, that goe under the *Names* of *Preachers*: And doe either so *unprofitably*, or *so slenderly and unskilfully teach*; that their people are never the better.

4. Adde to these *Dumb Dogs*, *Barking Curres*, *Scandalous Ministers*, that pull downe either with one, or both hands: (that is to say, with their *Lewd Lives*, or by their *Devilish Doctrine*.)

5. And lastly, Such *Serpentine Preachers*, as we are now upon: whereof some are possest with a *Dumb-Devill*: others with a *Witty-Devill*: a third sort, with a *Flattering-Devill*: a Fourth,

a *Fourth*, with a *Railing* or *Slandering Devill*; a *Fifth*, with a *Foule* and *Unclean-Devill*: a *Sixth*, with a *Laſie* and *Ambitious-Devill*: Some being able to preach; but withall ſo *Negligent*, that they will not: Some would; but are ſo *Ignorant*, that they cannot, or not to purpoſe: Some neither *Will*, nor *Can*; for want of uſing their gifts: Some are ſo *Fearfull* to *Offend* their *Benefactors*, that they *Dare* not: Some are ſo *Wicked*, that they *Should* not, &c. Let theſe, I ſay, be *Numbred*. And then you ſhall ſee, that we may not onely *Complaine*, as *Iude* of the *Primitive Church*. *That there are certaine men crept in, which were before ordained to condemnation*: But *many thouſands of them crept in*.

Secondly, Set theſe aſide, and compare the *Great Number* of them, with *thoſe few*, that remaine; who faithfully labour to diſcharge their *Truſt*, and feed their people with wholſome doctrine, and good life: whom they terme [*Puritans*.] And you ſhall ſee a miſerable and lamentable face of a *Church*: and be forced to acknowledge, that *The Harveſt is Great: but the labourers Few*, *Matth.* 9. 37. 38. And ſo few, that there was ſmall need, that *thirty* or *forty*, in a Shire, ſhould be taken away, and ſuſpended, at a clap; Becauſe they taught their people diligently: and as many of the former put in their roomes.

But I would aſke theſe *Lordly Prelats*, that ſuſpended them, a Queſtion or two.

1. Is it fit, that one ſhould have the *Provender* of (it may be) *fifty labouring Oxen*, for *lying* like a *Dog* in the *Manger*? both hindring the *Paſtors* to feed, and the *Hunger-ſtarved ſoules* to eat? Yea they *Muzzle* up the mouths of the *Oxen*, and *tie up* the tongues of the faithfull labourers, both from treading out the Corn, and eating of the Corne.

2. I would know of them, Whether the *palpable ignorance* of many *Millions* in this Land, doth not ariſe from the *want of meanes*, and removall of GODS *faithfull* miniſters: placing ſuch over people as are not worthy to be ſet with the *Dogs* of the *Flocke*, *Iob.* 30. 1. For *Alliance*, *Favour*, *Simony*, &c. have brought a *thouſand* men of bad learning, and worſe living into the miniſtery.

3. Let them tell me, whether it will be a *Good Plea*, at the *day of Iudgement*: when CHRIST ſhall aske them, *Why did you forbid my meſſengers to deliver my meſſage? Why did you ſilence ſuch, as converted my people; and ſet up others in their ſtead, that perverted them: when I had ſo plainly declared in my word*, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 16. *That this forbidding to preach the Goſpel, was the very filling up of the ſinnes of the Iewes*, (as *Oh* the *horror of this ſinne*! And the *fearfull evils* enſuing on it!) *To* Anſwer: *They would not conforme to every Ceremony*: Or rather, *they had tender conſciences*. Will this, I ſay, be a good Anſwer? Indeed, here your Arguments are *infallible*: For, if *Popery* will not *ſatisfie*, a *Priſon ſhall*. But *There*, Truth and innocency ſhall take place; whether *Plaintiffs*, or *Defendants*, *Petitioner*, or *petitioned* ſpeaks it.

Now, If their *Number* be ſo *many*, their *Cunning ſo great*, as I have declared; and their *induſtry ſo much*, to diſturb our peace; or to pervert our faith; or to corrupt our manners; or to wound our conſciences; or to deſtroy our ſoules: To which they have an *hundred* wayes, as the City *Thebes* had an *hundred* Gates into it: Or as ſo many lines, that doe all meete in one *point*. And, ſeeing whereſoever *God hath his Church*, *the Devill hath his Chappel*: Yea, for the moſt part, where CHRIST had his miniſter in the *Afternoone*, to build up: In the ſame Church had Satan his Chaplaine in the *Forenoone*, to pull downe: And, that the multitude are more apt to be carried away with the *Doctrine* of *Liberty*, then to be won with that which commands *Reſtraint*: What probability, that *Piety* ſhould thrive like *Profaneneſſe*?

Solomon ſaith, *Of a Prince, that hearkeneth to lies, all his ſervants are wicked*, *Prov.* 29. 12. It is more true of *ſuch a* Preacher. And Saint *Paul* ſaith that of *falſe Prophets*, which we find too true, by experience: *They ſhall draw a world after them*: whereas *Goodneſſe* hath but *few Adherents*; becauſe the gate is narrow that leads to life.

Which being ſo, I would faine know, how a few deſpicable Miniſters, whom all this great *Number* ſet themſelves againſt, and ſeeke by all meanes to diſgrace; ſhould thrive in their labours: But that their work ſhould be as wel *fruitleſſe* as *endles*: like that which is fai-

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ned of *Sisyphus*, a great Robber in *Attica*, and slaine by *Theseus*; who, (as *Poets* faine) *Rowleth a stone to the top of an hill in hell; which still falleth downe againe, and maketh his labour continuall.*

There is but *one right way of preaching.* That is, when *Sound Doctrine and Home-Application* goe together: *Many indirect wayes.* GOD chargeth his Ministers to refuse all waies but *One.* Satan bids them refuse that *One*, and take which way they *Please.*

I have laid open and delineated *sundry wayes*, that they preach; (and they alone may serve as *Spectacles*, to see the *Devill* and his works by, in the *Prelates*, and their *Creatures*) But they have an *Hundred* waies.

O that there were some *Severe Correction* appointed by the *Lawes*, against both *wicked and unprofitable Preaching*; As there is against *Murder and Felony*; sins lesse hainous. I doe not wish they were put to *Death*, as *Elijah* served *foure hundred and fifty of Baals* Prophets, 1 *King* 18. 19. 40. Nor *Cut off*; as Saint *Paul* wisht the *false Apostles* were, *Gal.* 5. 12. but I wish they were silenc't. For so should *thousands* be *Banisht* the ministery, and *Christians multiply* in our Land, as Corne did in *Egypt*, in the *Seven plentifull yeares*, *Gen.* 41. 47. 49. Whereas now the people heare many Sermons; and yet like those seven ill-favoured and leane fleshed kine, *vers.* 20. 21. It cannot be knowne, that they have heard them: for they are still as leane, and ill-favoured *Christians*, as they were before they heard them.

Or, if this will not be: My next desire of God is; That these Preachers last laid open (who runne like *Familiars* up and downe the earth: from the *University* into the *Country*: from the *Country* to the *City*: from the *City* to the *Court*: from the *Court* to *Cathedrals*: And from one Church to another, To *Doe the Devils Errands*) may be *Totally Silenced.* For one of these *Subtil-Flattering Sinons* will doe that, which *Ten yeares Siege* of Satan and all his other forces cannot effect, towards the destruction of *Our Troy*, the Church.

But admit those, whom GOD hath intrusted, to execute his judgements upon earth, should connive at them; and so make their sinne of *Soule-murder* their *Owne*: Yet *Severe* will be their *Doome* at the great day of accounts; if they doe not in the *Interim*, use their utmost, by a change to the contrary, to *Sue out their Pardon*, in the *Bloud* of CHRIST. Which day of accounts, if they did but thinke of; when *GOD shall set all their sinnes in order before them*; and CHRIST shall pronounce that fearfull sentence: *Depart from me yee Cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill and his Angels*; (which is an *Everlasting Departure*; not for a *Day* nor for *Yeeres of Dayes*, nor for *Millions of Yeeres*: but for *Eternity*: and that from CHRIST, and the *Fulnesse of joyes* at his right hand, and *pleasures for evermore*; To the *Damned*, to the *Devils*, to *Hell*; there to remaine in a *Bed of unquenchable Flames*, without either *Intermission*, or *End*, or *Ease*, or *Patience* to *Endure* it) Then I should not need to admonish them. The *Worst of men love their ease dearly.* But (*Alas! Poore Soules!*) the *Devill* so blinds them, that they never think of their *Latter End.*

And this is the cause they go on in so desperate a *Course*, and feare no more then *Adam* did, when he eate the *Apple.* When the Prophet had reckoned up all the calamities and sinnes of the *Jewes*: At the last he imputed all to this. *She remembred not her end.* And, when *Solomon* had spoken of al the *Vanities* of man, at last he opposeth this *Memorandum* as a *Counterpoise* against them all. *Remember, that for all these things, GOD will bring thee to judgement.* But let me tell thee Or rather *Heare* GOD in his Word *Telling* thee: That, to *Lie* for *Ever in a Bed of Quenchlesse flames*, is not *All.*

For as, in sinne, there be *Sundry Steps and Degrees*, whereby one and the same *Evil* is *Lessened* or *Increased*; and so becomes *More* or *Lesse hainous* before GOD: So, as thy sins have exceeded, thy sufferings shall also exceed, the number and measure of thy *Torments* shall be according to the multitude and magnitude of thine offenses. As thou hast beene a *Mighty Sinner*: So thou shalt be *Mightily punished.* For *GOD will reward every man according to his works.* As our works are *Better* or *Worse*: So shall our joyes in Heaven, or paines in Hell be *More* or *Lesse*. See *Rev.* 20. 12, 13. & 22. 12. *Luke* 12. 47. 48. *Matth.* 10. 15.

Which being so, (*viz.*) *That every man shall be more wretched*, as he hath beene *more wicked*: What will become of thee? Surely, thy sinnes are so *Prodigious*, that they scorne any proportion, under a whole volume of Plagues.

It remaines that I should spread thy sinnes in order before thee; and shew thee wherein they *Exceed* other mens, that shall goe to the same place of torment: And how they are greatned, and receive weight, and increase, in regard of *Circumstances*, which mightily aggravates them; and makes them *Out of Measure sinfull*. But the particulars are so many, That, if I should insist upon them, they would over-much swell the heap, and perhaps tire the reader. Besides, what is alleadged would be confirmed fully. He, which throwes his *Dagger* at a thiefe; let him be sure to hit him. *Otherwise* he disarmes himselfe, and strengthens his adversary. Wherefore take notice only in generall: *That all Pastors shall so give account* for their peoples soules, *Heb.* 13. 17. That wer't thou but *One of the former Number*, viz. of *Non-preaching Ministers*; (who come farre short of thee, and have much lesse to answer for) whensoever thou shouldst heare the *Bell toll* for a wicked man; Thou might'st cry out: *There is a Soule going to Hell, whose blood will be required at my hands; because I was not faithfull, and did not give him warning, Ezek.* 3. 18, 19. & 33. 7, 8, 9.

Whereas *Thou* hast preached *Lies* in CHRISTS name, and sought to winne as many to hell as thou couldst: *Consider* of it I beseech you. Thou art appointed a *Spirituall Nurse*, to feed the people of GOD with the *Two Breasts* of the *Old and New Testament*; and hast thy wages to that end. Now, if a *Nurse* should for *Wages* take in hand to nurse but *one Child*; who having either no *Milke*, or having *Milk enough*; should give it *None*: In so doing she were a *Murtheresse*: much more if she should give it *Poyson*, which yet would but *Kill* the *Body*: But thou giv'st thy whole Flock *Poyson*, in stead of *Milk*: which is enough (without GODS *over-ruling Providence*) to poyson all their soules. Thou art appointed by GOD, the *Spirituall Physitian* of their *Soules*. Now a *Physitian*, that takes charge of a *sick Patient*, may be guilty of his death, either by giving him *No Physick*; or *Improper Physick*; or *Poyson*. Every of which wayes thou art guilty; though principally in the *Last*, and *Worst* of them. Yea, thou giv'st *Two sorts of poyson*; that, if the one should not speed, the other may. The one is *Flattering* men in sinne; a *sweet poyson*: The other is *Bitter Girding* at holinesse; the best and mildest whereof, is *Bad enough*; and so thou wilt finde one day: For in that thou *Soothest* them up, in their sinnes, thou makest them all thy owne, *Isa.* 9. 16. *Heb.* 13. 17. *Beatificant populum istum*, *Psal.* 10. 3. Nay: That evill, can scarce be named, which thou art not the occasion of, by thy thus preaching; Yea, which thou thy selfe dost not, or hast not a will to doe; were it in thy power. For thou hast the same *Heart-Burning* against all the *Religious*, that *Haman* had against the *Jewes*: who would have cut them off, from being a people. Or *Caligula* against the *Romans*; who wisht, that *They All had but one Head, that so he might cut it off at a blow.*

I have laid open some part of thy will, and indeavour. Satan, who will one day be thy accuser, knowes much more. GOD, that *Searcheth the heart, and tryeth the reines, knowes all*, who measures what we doe, by what we desire to doe: and punisheth the *Action* according to the *Affection*, or *Intention*. For *Good*, or *Evill Thoughts and Desires*, in GODS account are *Good*, or *Evill Works*. If thou wantest power; it is enough thou *Wouldst*; As I could largely prove. But I am prompted to contract many things. Onely take notice of this, That every Sermon thou preachest will become one day, a *Bill of Enditement* against thee: And every soule that perisheth, by meanes of thy *Flattering* sinne, and *Flouting* holinesse, will adde to the *Pile* of thy unspeakable torments. For, in that thou damnest many soules, besides thine owne, thou *Super-erogatest* of Satan, and he shall give thee a *Treble Portion* of Hell-fire for thy paines. They shall *Perish* for *yeelding*: But thou for *Tempting* shalt be *Punished* farre above them. As we read, that when *John A Camber* was executed at *Yorke*, it was in great state: For he was *Hanged* upon a *Gibbet* raised a *Stage* higher in the midst of a *square Gallowes*, as a *Traitor Paramount*; and a number of his men, that were his chiefe *Complices*, were *Hanged* upon the *Lower Story*, round about him.

True

True it is. The *Seed of the Woman* is able to *Bruiſe* this *Serpents head.* And we are in the hand of a *Cunning Workman*, that of the *Knottieſt and Crookedſt Timber*, can make *Rafis* and *Sieling* for his owne houſe: That can ſquare the *Marble*, or *Flint*, as well as the *Freeſtone.* Yea, the GOD, whom thou haſt thus provoked, is ſo abundant in grace, and ſo great in *Power*, and ſo expert for skill: That, as with a word of his mouth, he *Can* create in thee a new heart (for it is as eaſie with him to make a man righteous, as to bid him be ſuch). So he is no leſſe *Willing.* As his entertaining of the *Prodigall Sonne*, in the *Goſpel* ſhowes, *Luke* 15.20.

If thou canſt ſee how *Deſperate* thy condition is; *Accuſe and Condemne* thy ſelfe; *Seriouſly Repent* what thou haſt done; and never more doe, what thou haſt repented.

If thou canſt lay hold upon CHRIST, by a lively faith, and manifeſt the ſame, by a change to the contrary, *Iſa.* 55.7. *Ezek.* 18.21,22,23.27,28. & 33.11. *Luke* 15.20. *Joel* 2.12.13.14. which Scriptures ſhew; That, if the *Summons* of vengeance ſhall waken us to repentance: we ſhall no ſooner change our minds, but GOD will change his ſentence. And, though I read not of *One like thee* (except *Manaſſes*) that ever returned home by Repentance: Yet it may be preſumed, That, as many a man ſends others to Heaven, and yet goes to Hell himſelfe: So not a few, having drawn others to Hell, yet themſelves returne, by a late repentance, to life.

So that there is a faire poſſibility of thy eſcaping that judgement, which thy ſinnes have deſerved; and nothing can hinder, but thy want of accepting the free offer of mercy, upon the conditions before expreſt. Which is worth thy ſpeedy reſolving. For how juſtly might GOD have bereaved thy body of a ſoule? thy ſoule of underſtanding? thy underſtanding of all poſſibility of comfort, long before this? That thou haſt ſpace to repent; a Tongue and Time to Call upon GOD for Mercy, is a Bleſſing, and farre more then he owes thee.

Which being ſo, (and that *a Plaiſter* is of no uſe, unleſſe it be *Applyed*) *Let my counſell be acceptable* (as *Daniel* ſaid to *Nabuchadnezzar*) And be intreated by the *Mercies* of GOD, as *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom.* 12.1. (As you would pleaſe him, & pleaſure your ſelf) to redeem the time paſt, with *Serious Repentance*: the time preſent, with *Religious Diligence*: the time to come, with *Carefull Providence.* And, when the LORD ſhall have accepted thee, thou ſhalt have no cauſe to repent, that thou took'ſt my counſell, in preferring Heaven to Hell. Otherwiſe, when that fearfull houre comes, which I before ſpake of: then you would faine goe to Heaven by CHRIST. But, Alas! as that *Deſpairing* Pope, ſaid, *The Croſſe could doe him no good, becauſe he had ſo often ſold it away*: So, How ſhould CHRIST doe you good, who have *Railed him away*? You have *Vexed* him ſo long as you lived; and his juſtice ſhall *Vexe* every veine of your heart, when you are dead.

The next to *Not-doing wrong*, is *To make Amends*: And the *only Amends*, we can make to GOD, when we have not had the grace to avoyd ſinne, is, *To confeſſe and Forſake* the ſinne, we have not avoyded: To be as *True ſervants* to GOD, as we have been *Enemies*: and performe as zealous obe-dience to him hereafter, as we have done to Satan formerly. Which is the way to *Cheat* the *Devill.*

And thus did *Paul*; who, (when his zeale was turned the right way) did not ſo much hurt before, as now he did good.

Indeed; Notorious offenders may not thinke to ſit downe with the taſk of ordinary ſervices: but the retributions of their obedience muſt be proportionable to their crimes. As was that of Saint *Pauls*: Who as he had done more evill to the Saints, then all the reſt of the Apoſtles: So *He Laboured more then they all*, in adding to the Church ſuch as ſhould be ſaved. Yea, ſaith our Saviour, (ſpeaking of him to *Ananias*,) *I will ſhew him how many things he muſt ſuffer for my names ſake*, *Acts* 9.16. Which was much the caſe of *Arch-Biſhop Cranmer*; who could never ſatisfie his conſcience after his *Recantation*, till he had burnt that hand to aſhes, with which he had ſubſcribed: So taking an holy revenge of himſelfe, by ſuffering in a manner, *Two Martyrdomes*; one whereof he put himſelfe to, by burning

his right hand; the other which the *Papiſts* put him to, by burning his whole body.

True, It is one of the *Madde Principles* of wickedneſſe; that it is a weakneſſe to relent: And rather to *die*, then *yeeld*: yea even the *worſt cauſes once undertaken muſt be upheld*, to the *Death*: But a *Gracious heart*, when it ſhall find its owne miſtaking, will not only remit an ungrounded diſpleaſure, but ſtudies to be revenged of it ſelfe, and to give ſatisfaction to the offended. Wherefore art thou a *Wiſe man*, or a *Foole*? Yea, a *Man*, or a *Beaſt*? For ſhame either be a *Man*: or confeſſe thy ſelfe to be a *Beaſt*. A *Wiſe man*, or acknowledge thy ſelfe a *Foole*. If thou beeſt a *Wiſe man*, it will be ſeene by this. *He that is Wiſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is wiſe to himſelfe*; Heis not *Wiſe* againſt himſelfe; as thou haſt beene hitherto. And in another place. *A prudent man ſeeth the Plague, and hideth himſelfe*: that is, *Flieth* to GOD for ſuccour. *But the fooliſh goe on ſtill, and are puniſhed, Prov.* 22.3. Thou haſt deferred it too long already.

Thus having made a *Diſcovery* of thy ſinne, together with the infection and diſperſion of it: I ſhould proceed to the *Meanes* of thy *Recovery*. But I ſpare my *Reader*. Beſides, ſhould *Suada* the reputed *Goddeſſe of perſwaſion* never ſo much admoniſh thee: It were in vaine: For thou art like the *Deafe Adder, that ſtops her eare, and will not hearken to the voyce of the Charmer, though he be moſt excellent in charming, Pſal.* 58.4. 5. And thy heart is like a ſtone, which being throwne up *ten thouſand* times, will never learne to aſcend: Or *Iron* quencht often in Vineger, which will not yeeld to the hammer, nor be forged to any good uſe, or once change its faſhion.

Saul was ſo eager in the purſuit of *David*; and thirſted ſo after his bloud, that having ſent firſt one company to apprehend him; then a ſecond; after that a third: It being told him, That GOD had changed every of their hearts, and turned them into Prophets, that he might be prevented: *He* could not ceaſe; but goes himſelfe, 1 *Sam.* 19.20.23. The *Jewes* would not *Beleeve* in CHRIST, after ſo cleare predictions of the Prophets; after ſo miraculous demonſtrations of his *Divine power*; after ſo many graves ranſackt; Dead raiſed; Devils ejected; limbs and eyes new created; after ſuch teſtimonies of the Star, Sages, *Angels*, GOD himſelfe; after ſuch triumphs over death, and hell: But obſtinately reject him for their *Meſſias*. So ſhouldſt thou ſee ſome of thy fellowes ſtruck dead in the Pulpit, as they are belching out their ſpleen againſt Religion and goodneſſe, as it fared with *Nittingall Parſon of Crondall in Kent*. All were one. As when the neighbouring *Ammonites* heard of GODS fearfull vengeance upon the *Philiſtims*, they could not be warned: but muſt be taking up the quarrell againſt *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* 7. & 11. *chap.*

Nothing but *Grace* can teach us to make uſe of others judgements. And ſhouldſt thou, like thoſe *Sodomits*, be ſtruck blind in thy purſuit of ſome *Lot*; thou wouldſt ſtill perſiſt: Though they gnaw their tongues for paines: yet they repent not of their *Deeds, Revel.* 16. 8.9. So *Hard a Taſk* is *Repentance*. And the reaſon is. *Cuſtome* is not onely a *Grave* to *Bury* the *Soule* in: But a *Stone rolled* to the mouth of it, to *keep* it *downe*. Wherefore I leave this *Moth* labouring to extinguiſh the light of other mens goodneſſe. I know in the end he will ſinge his owne wings.

Onely remember, that *Warning not taken* is a certaine *Preſage of Deſtruction*. A *Man that hardneth his necke, when he is rebuked, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy, Prov.* 29.1. & 1.24. to 32. The ſonnes of *Eli* would not hearken unto, nor obey the voyce of their Father. Why? *Becauſe* (ſaith the Text) *The LORD was determined to deſtroy them*, 2 *Sam.* 2.25. *I know* (ſaith the *Prophet* to *Amaziah*) *That GOD hath determined to deſtroy thee*; *Becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not obeyed my counſell*, 2 *Chron.* 25.16.20.

But in the meane time many ſuffer; the Godly are diſcouraged, the wicked are hardned by thy falſe wreſting, and miſapplying the Scriptures. Wherefore GOD of his goodneſſe grant, that all falſe Prophets may be either *inwardly Lambs*; (as they are not) or appeare *outwardly Wolves*, as they are. Either to turne their hearts from their *Wolviſh condition*; or to pull their *Sheepskin* over their eares; That no *Juglers* may privily by their miſts and myſteries pervert the flock of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Nor

Nor let any, that feare GOD, or care for the welfare of his *Church*, in the leaſt meaſure further their bringing in; nor hinder their *Caſting* out of the *Miniſtery*: Be they *Brethren*, *Children*, or *Nep'ewes*. No, vouchſafe not to open thy lips for theſe *Marble-hearted*, and *Savage-minded* men, ſaying; *How ſhall they and theirs live, if they be turned out of their Livings*? For better *Starve*, then be *Fed* with the *Bloud of Soules*. Neither did the *Prelates* thinke this *Argument* of either *Force* or *Weight*, when they turned GODS *Faithfull Miniſters out*, and put theſe *Miniſters* of Satan in.

Beſides, there is no *Safety* for the *Lambs*; but by the *Death*, or *Removall* of the *Wolves*. And, when the *Seed* of the *Serpent* fight againſt the *Seed* of the *woman*: That which helps the one, muſt needs hurt the other. He *Threatneth* the *Innocent*, who *Spareth* the *Delinquent*. Which made GOD to reject *Saul*, and take away his Kingdome; for ſhewing mercy to *Agag*, 1 *Sam.* 15.

I know, it is not honeſt to uſe armes, as the *Biſhops* did, where the controverſie may be ended with *Treaties*. But there is no hope of their reclaiming, or amendment; as we have found ſince the *Parliament* by an hundred. For you can hardly name one of the generation that have changed their minds, though they feared every day, to loſe their means. I confeſſe they have a *Strong Hope*; that, if they ſtand out the loſſe of a *Vicarage*, the *Biſhops*, when they prevaile (which I hope will never be) will *Prefer them to a Parſonage* worth *Five* of it.

Indeed ſome, (And thoſe no *Small Fooles*) at the beginning of the *Parliament* (when they had not the hopes they have now) have been ſo *Sofined*, that they have preach'd *Recantation-Sermons*, and profeſt with teares in their eyes; that (ſhould the times change never ſo) they would now be honeſt. But they have preſently *Hardned* againe, and *Fled* to *Oxford*. Such are the *Parliaments-Converts*. Well may they turne to flat *Popery*, and there ſtay, if the times ſhould turne: but never to the *Truth*. For they bend their *tongues like Bowes for lies: but they are not valiant for the Truth*, *Jer.* 9 3.

Object. But you will ſay: Peradventure theſe *Anti-Puritan Preachers*, (I call them ſo, Becauſe they thinke themſelves ſo, though I could eaſily prove themſelves *Arch-Puritans*, if time would permit) have ſomething to plead for themſelves. And it were good to heare their defenſes, before we caſhiere them.

Anſwer. I confeſſe, they will help themſelves very handſomely with a *Diſtinction*. Yea, they have deviſed a world of fleſhly *Reaſons*, to maintaine and uphold corruptions: For they beat their braines and ſpend their wits, to *Deface GODS Ordinances*, *and Eſtabliſh their Owne Traditions*. And, if ever there were any time, in which our *Saviour CHRISTS* words were verified, where he ſaith, *If it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the very Elect*, It is now; There be ſuch *Goodly Colours and Showes* made and ſet upon matters, to hold the people contented in their ignorance. So that all is good which they doe.

As, why doe they thus preach and raile againſt the *Godly*, and their preciſe walking? For ſooth, for the *Publike utility*, and the *Churches ſake*: for the Peace of the *Church*; and for *Obedience and Good Order*. When they have as great a *Care* of the *Church* (unleſſe you call *Epiſcopacy* the *Church*) as *Judas had a Care of the* Poore. For is it likely, That the *Enemies* of the *Croſſe* of CHRIST ſhould *Take care for the Church of CHRIST*? Even as likely, As that *The Iriſh* Rebels, *The Engliſh Traitors*, *A* Popiſh *Army*, *And all the Theeves and Cut-purſes*, that are now riſen up againſt the *Parliament*; ſhould *Fight* for the *Lawes*, and the *Proteſtant Religion*.

I am ſure, Saint *James* argues otherwiſe. Whoſe words are. *Doth a Fountaine ſend forth*, *at one place*, *ſweet water and bitter*? *Can the Figtree*, *my Brethren*, *bring forth Olives*? *Either a Vine Figs*? *So can no Fountaine make both ſalt water and ſweet*, *Jam.* 3. 11. 12.

But every age hath had many ſuch *Hypocrites*. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* cry, *The Temple of the LORD*, *The Temple of the LORD*; whiles they *Deſpited and Crucified the LORD of that Temple*. The *Jewes* colour their *Envie* againſt CHRIST, with their *Duty* to *Ceſar*. And many the like. And the reaſon is this:

Error is ſo foule an Hagge, that if it ſhould come in the *Owne Shape*, *Nuda Facie*: A man

would *Loath* it. If *Jezabel* had not painted her face, ſhe had not gotten ſo many *Doting Adulterers*. Theſe *Wolves* come evermore in *Sheeps clothing*, *Matth. 7. 15. Sub Pello Ovina; Lupus Rapax*; As the *Fowler*, by the benefit of his *Stalking-horſe*, murders the *Fowles*. *Many* (ſaith CHRIST) *ſhall come in my Name. Nomine meo, non Suo. Not in their Owne Name*: For then their words would not be taken.

Every man is an *Hearty Patron of his owne Actions*. And it is a *Deſperate Cauſe*, that hath *No Plea*. Yea the more *Foule* any *Project is*, the *Fairer Vizor* it ſtill ſeeks. *Come ſee my zeale for the LORD of Hoſts*, ſaies *Jehu*. His *words* were for the LORD: But his *Project* was for the *Kingdome*. And *Comets* make a greater *blaze*, then *Fixed Stars*. Thoſe *Monopoliſts*, that *undoe* the Common-wealth, have the moſt *Colourable Pretences* to *Benefit* it. But, as CHRIST ſaid, *Qui vos recipit*: So in effect, *Qui vos Decipit, me Decipit*. Even the *Cut-Purſe*, when one found his hand in his Pocket, and asked, what it did there, anſwered, *If I had not had more Care of your Purſe, then your ſelfe, it might have beene gone*. But if *Sanballat and Tobiah* put in for building of the *Wall*; they will *Daub* with untempered mortar; And it will prove but a *rotten peece of work*: For they conſult to *Caſt down CHRIST from his Dignity*: *They bleſſe with their mouths*: *but curſe with their hearts*, Pſal. 62. 4.

Object. But in preaching againſt *Puritans*, they ſpeak not againſt any that are *Religious*: But againſt *Non conformiſts*, which deſerve to be blamed, being a people, that *Diſturb* the Peace of the *Church*; *Weaken* the *Sinewes* of *Diſcipline*: Are *Over-Fiery*, and ſtirre up *Contention*.

Anſw. Why then doe they Caſt the *Same Aſperſion* upon thoſe that have nothing to doe with *Subſcription*; As *Noble-men*, and *Gentlemen*: Yea upon the *Great Councell of Parliament*? So that (however they fit Scriptures to their paſſion, and pretend faire) It is a ſure ſigne, that their *Hearts* are full of nothing but *Pure Malice*, and *Venomous Rancor* againſt *All Grace and Goodneſſe*.

It is true. They will neither acknowledge their *Owne Faults*, nor *Others Vertues*. And ſo would be thought to *Inveigh* againſt an *Error* on the *Right hand*, *Too much Preciſeneſſe*, *Opinion of Righteouſneſſe*; and the like. But their *True meaning and utmoſt endeavour is*, *To Daſh all Holineſſe*, *and Sincerity out of Countenance*, *and to pluck up all Power of Religion by the Roots*. A man, that *Truly hates Superſtition*, will not *Preſently Caſt* himſelfe into *Irreligion*: But *Fix* upon the *Meane*. If *Two Maſtiffes* be jarring betweene themſelves, when the *Beare comes*, They forget *All Private Strife*, *To Aſſaile* the *Common Enemy*. So, if theſe did not *Degenerate* from Chriſtians, they would ſometimes lay aſide theſe *Particular Differences in judgement*, touching *Small Matters*: and *Set upon foule Sinnes*, *and Wicked Practiſes*; as *Swearing*, *Drunkenneſſe*, *Profanation* of the LORDS *Day*, *&c*. But this they never doe, or not to any purpoſe. Whereas both in their *Sermons*, and *Books*, and *Diſcourſe*, they doe (with *ſtrong Reaſons drawne from the Wiſdome of the Fleſh*) *Defend Non-Reſidents*, *Double-Benefic'd men*: *Men of no Learning*, *and worſe Living* in the miniſtery: with ſundry other Abominations; as *Croſſes*, *Altars*, *Cringings*, and the like. Now I wonder what could be thought of the Pope, if he, being at *Fewd* with *England*; and ſeeing the *Turk* begin to invade; ſhould be ſo farre from aiding us, that he joyned with the *Turk* againſt us: Were he to be thought CHRISTS *Friend*? No ſurely. Even ſo it is impoſſible that they ſhould beare any *Love* to GOD, or CHRIST, when they are ſo farre from *Aiding* the *Godly*: That they *Take Sins* Part, the *Worlds* Part, and the *Devils* Part, againſt GOD, and the *Children of* GOD.

The truth is. They *Pretend* the *Church*, *and ſpeak of* Peace, and *Terme us*, *The Troublers of the State*. But they are the *Sole-Cauſe* of all the *Ignorance* and *Impiety* in the Land; and of theſe *wofull Diſtractions and Diſtempers* now on foot. Reſembling thoſe *Infidels* in the *Primitive Church*; who would *raiſe mutinies*, and *uproares*: And then *Father* them upon the *Chriſtians*. Or the *Pouder-Traytors*, who decreed to *Blow up the State*; and then *Father* it upon the *Puritans*.

But this will not ſerve *Another* day; when all the *Falſe Gloſſes*, which they put upon things, ſhall be wiped away.

The

The *Wolfe* in the *Fable* (oh, that it were but a *Fable*!) when he ſees the *Lamb drinking* at the poo'e, comes *Blundring* into the *Water*, and *Troubles* it: *Then Quarrels* with the *Lamb*: *Quare turbaſti aquam?* Why haſt thou troubled the water? So *Ahab* the *Wolfe* told *Elijah* the *Lamb*: That *He troubled Iſrael.* And thus dealt *Saul* with *David*; who to colour his *Malice* the better, gave him the *Epithete* of an *Enemy*; told the people, That *David ſought his life*; and *Jonathan*, That *He had choſen the ſon of Iſhai, to his confuſion, and the confuſion of his houſe*: When each man knew that *Himſelfe Alone* was *Guilty*. He is a *Weak Politician*, that knowes not how to *Guild over* the *Worſt Project*, with a *Faire Pretence*.

Object. But theſe *Puritanicall-Preachers* (ſay they) are like *Birds, that defile their owne Neſt*; in ſo Rebuking the *Sinnes* of the *Miniſtery*: whereof this *Character* is a ſufficient Inſtance. Who may be anſwered thus.

Anſw. Yee know not how farre this *Exception* reachech: and againſt *Whom* yee ſhoot this bolt. For did not the *Prophets reprove the wickedneſſe of the Prieſts*? did not our *Saviour CHRIST lay open the Qualities of the Scribes and Phariſees*? did not the *Apoſtles paint out wicked Teachers, in their Colours*? It is the part of *GODS ſervants*, to *rebuke ungodlineſſe, in whomſoever they find it.* And in caſe Miniſters would not be *Contemned*; they muſt not *deſerve Contempt.*

But admit theſe men (who are *Thornes* in thine *Eyes*, as *Job* was in the *Devils*) were *Faulty*, in being *Over-zealous*, or *Over-Scrupulous*; (Though the truth is, we have more need of *Wings*, then of *Lead*) It no whit Juſtifies Thee. Informers of *Penal-Statutes* make often juſt complaints: But becauſe their *End* is not the *Correction* of *Faults*, but *Fiſhing* for the *Mulcts*, or *Wreaking* their *Spleenes*: They doe the office of *Devils*. Yea, how many *Falſe Zibaes* are there of *You*, who *unjuſtly* accuſe *honeſt Mephiboſhethis*, To get away their *Livings* and *Places*? And ſuch *out-doe Miſchiefe* it ſelfe.

Againe. Put caſe both thy *Aime* ſhould be *Good*, (as that man is *Worſe then Madde*, who perſecutes that as *Falſe*, which he knowes to be *True*) Although it is *Evident* enough, *Thou oppoſeſt Non-Conformitants* either *without Conſcience*, or *againſt Conſcience*: And that this thy preaching ſhould produce the ſame effect thou deſireſt: yet, in the firſt place, *There is a way* (ſaith *Solomon*) *that ſeemeth Right unto a man*: *But the Iſſue thereof are the wayes of Death.* *Prov.* 16. 25. And, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks. *He flatters himſelfe in his owne eyes, whiles his iniquity is found worthy to be hated*, *Pſal.* 36. 2.

2. That is the *Higheſt and Chiefe Reaſon*, that maketh for *Religion* and *Piety*. Nor is that which is *Evill* of it ſelfe to be ventured on for the *Good*, that commeth by *Accident*. It is a *Rule* in all Chriſtian Actions. That *neither any Evill is to be done, that Good may come of it*: *Nor any Good of Obligation to be Omitted, for feare, that Evill may enſue.*

And ſo much in Generall, of the *Second Sort of Un-preaching Miniſters, that Edifie to Damnation.*

I ſhould conclude with an *Advertiſment* to *All ſorts of Hearers.* But I am *Rounded* in the *Eare*, here to *Caſt Anchor.*

Imprimatur, Ja. Cranford.

FINIS.

Errata.

Page 35. line 33. leave out *and.*

Imprimatur, Jn. Cranford.

FINIS.

Errata.

Page 55. line 35. leave out [illegible]

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